

Friday July 5 1996

Abu Dhabi D 8.50
Algeria L 2.20
Andorra P 10
Australia AS 26
Bahamas B 0.85
Belgium B 6.60
Bolivia B 1.40
Brazil R 12.50
Cayman C 1.00
Czech Republic KC 46
Denmark DK 15
Dubai D 8.50
Egypt E 0.80
Estonia L 30
Finland FM 11
France F 10
Germany DM 13.50
Greece D 350

Hong Kong HK 25
Hungary H 200
Iceland IC 165
India IN 55
Israel IS 9.90
Italy I 3.00
Japan J 125
Korea K 150
Kuwait K 120
Latvia LS 2
Lithuania LT 300
Luxembourg LF 55
Malaysia M 50
Malta ML 0.45
Morocco D 29
Netherlands G 4 07
Norway NK 15

Oman OR 1 00
Pakistan P 10
Poland Z 90
Portugal P 200
Puerto Rico PR 10
Romania R 10
Saudi Arabia R 10
Singapore S 15
Slovakia SK 55
Slovenia SL 20
Spain S 225
Sweden SK 16
Switzerland SF 3
Thailand TH 100
Turkey T 100
USA US 2.75
Zimbabwe Z 87.50

The Guardian INTERNATIONAL
NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR 46,587

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The everlasting Neil Young • Travels with Phish

Review Michael Bennett, Paul Theroux (with portrait of Neil Young)



Grand old man of '38 nurtures wistful hopes that new star will lift 58-year burden

Frank Kenting goes back 58 years with Wimbledon finalist Tim Henman...

undimmed when Henman went out 7-6, 7-6, 6-4 in rain-affected match of stops and starts. "Young Henman seems to me certain to win Wimbledon some time soon. He is remarkably impressive, such beautiful strokes, and an equable temper, and, crucially, he's learning that the bigger the point, then the better you have to play."

Blair's victory pledges

Labour's pledges

TONY Blair's launch of Labour's five-pledge Road to the Manifesto last night unleashed a propaganda blitz between the major parties which pitted familiar Conservative allegations of extravagance against Labour counter-charges of reckless mendacity by the "Tory lie machine."

Labour's pledges

- Cut class sizes for 5-7 year olds using cash from abolishing assisted places scheme.
• Fast-track punishment for persistent young offenders.
• Reduce NHS waiting lists by 100,000 patients using £100m saved from cutting bureaucracy.
• Take 250,000 under-25 year olds off benefit using cash from tax on privatised utilities.
• Tough rules for government spending; ensure low inflation; keep interest rates down.

commitments on devolution — have been made to head off Tory attacks. But after their disastrous mid-week propaganda initiative — an anti-Labour spoof called The Road to Ruin — Conservative strategists promised to harry him all the same.

Charles offers '£15-£20m' divorce terms to Diana

Quick end to marriage likely after 10-week deadlock broken

Alex Bellos THE Prince of Wales offered the Princess terms for divorce last night, breaking 10 weeks of bitter deadlock. Diana's media adviser, Jane Atkinson, confirmed that her lawyers had received proposals from Charles's lawyers last night, but declined to comment further. Buckingham Palace refused to comment.

giving his wife an annual allowance. The prince, though able to afford the payoff in the long term, does not have the liquidity necessary to make make it immediately and will need financial help from the Queen or may seek a multi-million-pound loan. His annual income of almost \$5 million from the Duchy of Cornwall leaves him with about £1.5 million for personal expenses after deducting nearly \$2.6 million in official expenditure and £1 million tax.

though it is unlikely the prince will agree to her request to retain an office at St James's Palace, close to the prince's London apartment. There is agreement between the prince and princess that access to their children, Prince William, 14, and 11-year-old Prince Harry, will be shared equally. Both Charles and Diana will continue to have a close involvement in their sons' upbringing.

Inside Britain World News Finance Sport
3 7 12 7

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Lloyds Bank Travellers Cheques

Launch of a document that 'makes you think of PEPs and private health insurance'



New Labour's pledge

Images from The Road to the Manifesto: 'Everyone is young healthy and white of skin - the kind of promotional literature of banks and insurance companies'



New Labour. New nouns. Real words. No verbs

Sketch



Simon Hoggart

LABOUR press conferences are run these days with the slick efficiency of a supermarket opening. First they play tapes - rock 'n' roll for people whose musical appreciation comes from elevators. Moving On Up. Things Can Only Get Better. upbeat songs which make you yearn to buy more extra-thick yogurt.

they acted as a clique, cheering Mr Blair and jeering at questions which they didn't care for - a salutary experience for all the hacks. Mr Blair addressed us. It was a cunning speech designed to say simultaneously that New Labour was entirely different from Old Labour, and yet in some mysterious way linked statistically to Ancient Labour.

organisation which claims miserable poverty they have an awful lot of people working for them) even handed out cards listing all five instant pledges, labelled: "Keep this card and see that we keep our promises."

Review



Catherine Bennett

PLEDGE is not a word one often encounters except on the stacks of spray-on furniture cleaners, or maybe at an old fashioned pawnbroker's. Yet the Labour Party's new publication, New Labour, New Life for Britain, features five whole pledges.

personal account manager. Why should we trust him? Believe me, he seems to be saying, I want to help, just read the brochure. Yet the promotional literature of banks and insurance companies does, in the end, spell out what you will get in return for your investment. New Labour, New Life for Britain takes no such risks; it prefers the quasi-religious assertions of the Scout Promise: "On my honour, I promise to do my best, to do my duty to God and to the Queen, to help other people and to keep the Scout Law."

equally tortured subject, good but not best, essential but not compulsory. "Strengthening family life is essential to any decent concept of a civil society," we are told. On the other hand, "Ultimately government cannot rebuild family life. But government should not undermine it, when it could encourage it without being either intolerant or unrealistic. Come again? "Again, there is a programme of action here that is modern, radical and sensible."

Commons anger at jail cash crisis

Alan Travis Home Affairs Editor

MPS AND prison governors yesterday voiced strong protests over the Government's failure to acknowledge that it faces a price tag of up to £2 billion to bring Britain's jails up to recommended minimum security standards.

tary, Michael Howard, had not told the Commons what he intended to do about Learmont's prison security report despite a promise to tell MPs in the spring. "Where is that report, what will the recommendations of Learmont come to in total, and how many is Mr Howard going to accept?" he asked.

Woman wins top opera house job

Den Claxton Arts Correspondent

THE Royal Opera House put an end to months of rumour yesterday when it announced that the Royal National Theatre's executive director Genista McIntosh is to replace Sir Jeremy Isaacs as general director.

funded by £80 million of National Lottery money. More than 800 staff will lose their jobs when the opera house moves. Although two venues have been announced, there is still uncertainty about where the opera will perform.

Loser of '38 backs Henman to go all the way - one day

continued from page 1 played Daniel Penn in an epic decider, only to collapse in the fifth set and be carried from the court suffering from heat exhaustion and cramp. "It was convinced the mishap was due to the weight of my sweat-soaked long flannel trousers. At home I had my tailor run up some prototype white shorts modelled on what was then worn on the rugby field. Wimbledon might have been a touch miffed, but I'd introduced shorts to tennis and I think you can say they stayed there, what?"

just to be on the same court." In 1931, in the society wedding of the year, Austin had married the feted and beautiful actress Phyllis Konstam, whom he had met two years before when travelling by Cunard to the US Open at Forest Hills.

HEAL'S advertisement featuring a hat, a sun, and a man's face, with text: 'SUMMER SALE NOW ON' and 'BREATHLESS FEAR AND SUSPENSE'.

SCORPION TRAIL advertisement by Geoffrey Archer, featuring a scorpion and a man's face, with text: 'He thought he'd be safe here. No-one need ever know his past. But twenty years in hiding is not enough. Now they want him again.'

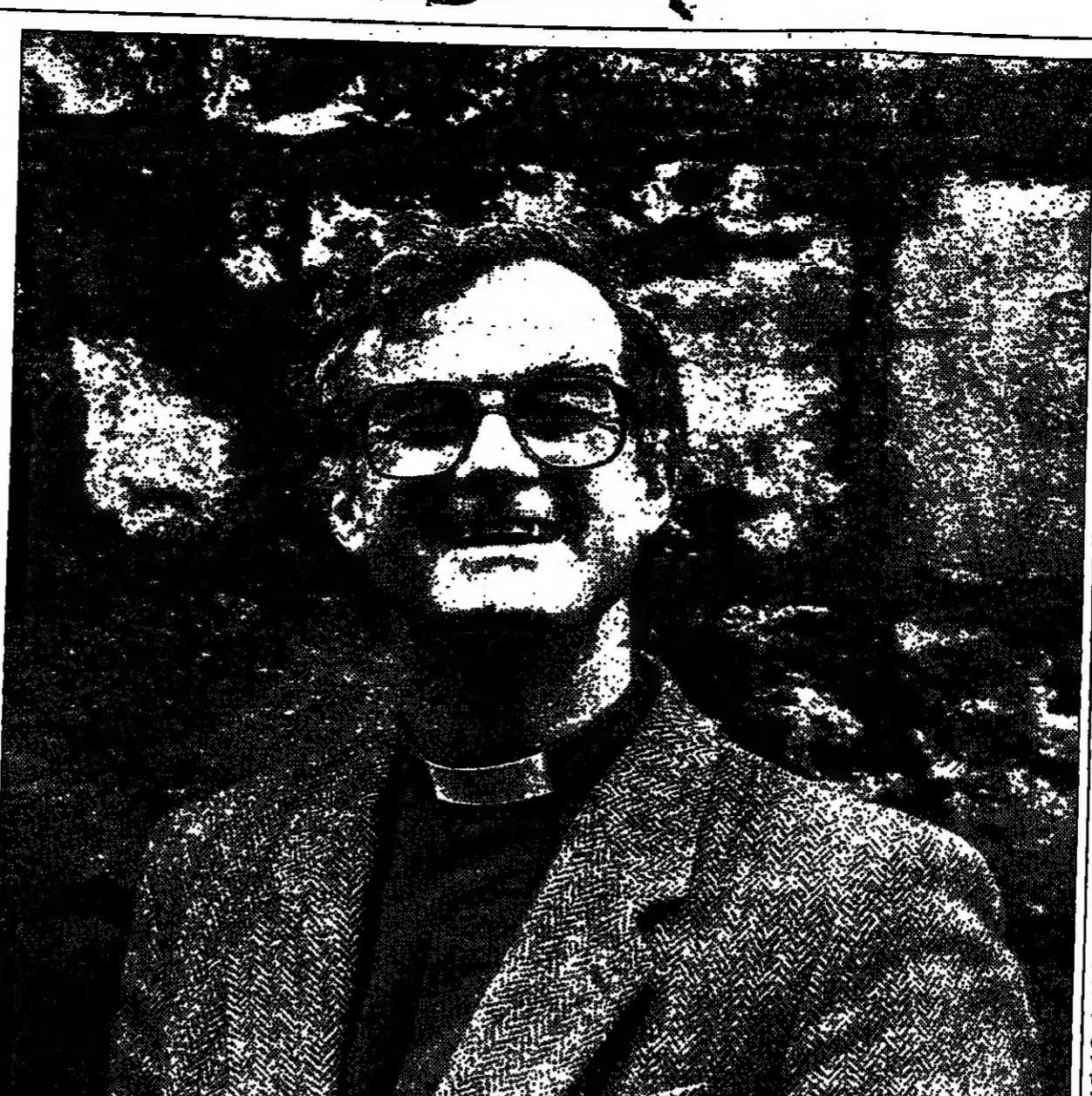
Handwritten Arabic text: 'سكنا من الاجل'



Canon Rex Davis: refused to leave

Lincoln dean and his deputy refuse to go despite pleas and damage caused by their clash

Madeleine Bunting and David Ward report



Dean Brandon Jackson: antagonism deepened after he faced charges of improper sexual conduct with vergers

Fight is on for Yeltsin spoils

David Hearst in Moscow

BEFORE the dust had settled on Boris Yeltsin's stunning defeat of his communist challenger in the Russian presidential election, the deal-making and bitter infighting was under way last night as each faction in the president's entourage demanded a share of the spoils.

At issue is how far Mr Yeltsin goes down the path set up by his new nationalist backers and what place is left for the economic liberals. Looking relieved at the end of a bruising campaign which ended in a week-long spell under medical supervision, Mr Yeltsin, aged 65, appeared on television to thank voters for their support and to appeal for unity.

With the final result all but officially declared, Mr Yeltsin had opened up a convincing 14 point lead, winning by nearly 54 per cent of the vote to Gennady Zyuganov's 40.4 per cent.

The first recipient of Mr Yeltsin's patronage — to the delight of Western backers — was the centrist prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, who was appointed to nominate the next government.

He immediately plunged the knife into General Alexander Lebed, who traded his first round vote of 11 million, in return for a seat in the Yeltsin administration. Gen Lebed has demanded that the post of vice-president be created for him.

"I don't plan to give anyone any part of my powers," Mr Chernomyrdin said.

Gen Lebed, Mr Yeltsin's new national security chief, said voters had given the president a huge loan of hope and confidence. "Now we must justify it. Otherwise the country will explode," he said.

Mr Zyuganov conceded defeat with the words: "This is a reality. Millions of citizens voted for Yeltsin and I have to respect the rules which obtain in all civilised societies."

Grigory Yavlinsky, the liberal economist who came fourth in the first round, said he was willing to work in a coalition government. Mr Chernomyrdin also spurned his offer.

Electoral report, page 6; Leader comment, page 6; The hammer and sick, page 9

Carey fails to end cathedral row



Lincoln Cathedral: life there damaged by 'mutual antipathy'

THE Archbishop of Canterbury gave an extraordinary display of his own impotence and frustration over an "irreconcilable personal conflict" between two senior clergy at Lincoln Cathedral yesterday.

Dr George Carey said he had requested both the Dean, the Very Reverend Brandon Jackson, and the subdean, Canon Rex Davis, to resign last month; the dean is "praying" about his position and Canon Davis has refused to leave.

Neither the archbishop nor the Bishop of Lincoln, the Right Reverend Robert Hardy, has the power to force the men to go — as cathedral clergy they are appointed by the Crown and no one can sack them unless a disciplinary offence is proven.

In an emotional statement at Lambeth Palace, the archbishop appealed to the men to leave for the good of the cathedral and the Church.

"They are unfortunately locked into a relationship of mutual antipathy which will continue to damage cathedral life for as long as they both hold office there," said Dr Carey, adding that both men failed to fulfil the basic requirement that a priest be a wholesome example to his flock.

At his home in Lincoln, Canon Davis said he had no plans to resign and would make a formal statement next week based on a letter he has written to the archbishop. The dean is on holiday.

The antagonism between the two men dates back to the arrival of Dean Jackson in 1988 but received widespread publicity last summer when the dean was exposed to a humiliating consistory court hearing on a charge of improper sexual conduct with a vergers.

After the charge was not proven, the dean complained to the media that some of his colleagues had been eager to take up the claims. Since then, the acrimony has intensified with a series of stormy chapters and staff meetings returning votes of no confidence to the dean. In February, 30 canons met the dean and overwhelmingly approved a resolution asking Dr Carey to take decisive action.

The Bishop of Lincoln failed in his attempts to reconcile the two and threatened to resign last November; he called in the Archbishop of Canterbury to help.

Dr Carey admitted yesterday: "I run the risk of being ignored but I'm not empowered legally to do anything. I feel the frustration of many people within and beyond the Church at the fact that, under current circumstances, nobody has the power to resolve a problem causing such harm."

He said legislation due to come before General Synod shortly should ensure that a situation like Lincoln could not happen again.

The archbishop's decision to publicise the fact that the men had refused his request after personal interviews last month indicates a last-ditch effort to shame the men publicly into resigning.

Yesterday Bishop Hardy was fulfilling two engagements that had been in his diary for more than a year but found time to echo Lambeth's exasperation in a statement. "The effects of the current deadlock on the cathedral staff are deeply traumatic and they are both painful and disconcerting to many in the diocese," he said.

A card on the bookcase in his study at Bishop's House, Lincoln, put it in simpler more personal terms: "Lord grant me patience and I wait it NOW."

The bishop's personal assistant, Canon Raymond Rodger, was holding the fort in Lincoln. He said it was hoped the two men would listen to the moral authority of the archbishop. "I am deeply saddened that people of such seniority and with such a background of Christian service have reached a point whereby they are inhibiting themselves from finding a resolution," he said. He found offensive the reported remarks of the dean that there was something intrinsically evil about the cathedral. "It has had worshippers in it for a thousand years. The place is steeped in prayer," he said. "There are a lot of godly lay people who worship here and do not recognise anything wrong within the fabric or the congregation and are deeply wounded and hurt by such suggestions."

Archbishop Carey said both men had been assured they would not suffer financial losses in their pension if they were to retire. The dean earns £20,000 and the subdean a little less. He also added that the two men, who are both in their early sixties, would be free to apply for new jobs in the Church of England.

not even she could have imagined how much blood would be there seven years after he arrived with a brief to "sort out" Lincoln following a disastrous fundraising trip to Australia.

In his youth, Dean Jackson claims to have been a champion boxer. Now in his early sixties, he ran the London Marathon for the second time this year.

He is a blunt man, proud of his working-class origins, and had built up a reputation when Provost of Bradford of being energetic, evangelical and prepared to back his problems. In short, he was the sort of man to catch Lady Thatcher's eye. And, allegedly, it was her intervention which saw him transferred to the very different environs of Lincoln.

Dean Jackson's concern on arriving was that the cathedral had no sense of outreach or mission to the city. He saw it as preoccupied with its own issues and had no reluctance in using the media in his battle to reform. Such tactics alienated his staff, and earned him a reprimand from the Bishop of Lincoln.

The Dean has another ordeal ahead of him shortly. Verity Freestone, the vergers who claims he seduced her, is taking him to an industrial tribunal on a charge of sexual harassment next week. She claims sexual discrimination and unfair dismissal. — Madeleine Bunting

Working-class marathon man

THE Very Reverend Brandon Jackson has a taste for flord language and a vivid perception of the forces of good and evil in the world. After the case of sexual harassment against him was not proven last summer, he launched a visceral attack on the evil spiritual forces at work in the hallowed medieval cloisters of Lincoln Cathedral.

It was the sort of public pronouncement which provoked shivers of distaste and rolling of eyes among those Anglican faithful who prefer their Christianity a little more polite.

Lady Thatcher predicted that there would be "blood on the carpet" when she appointed Dean Jackson — but

Down under streetfighter

CANON Rex Davis has kept a much lower profile than his rival. An Australian, he says he was brought up in the slums of Sydney and is a born streetfighter. Since 1977, he has been suspended in Lincoln, no doubt bringing to bear those childhood skills.

His great claim to fame was his disastrous fundraising venture to Australia when he took Lincoln Cathedral's copy of the Magna Carta down under in June 1988. But instead of raising money, he lost a total of £56,000 on the six-month visit.

In addition, questions were raised as to why he had to take his wife, Caroline, his then 25-year-old daughter, Sarah, her friend Rachel Johnson, and his colleague Jo

Brogden, managing director of the cathedral shops. More questions were asked as to why he also appointed his cousin to co-ordinate the PR in Australia and another relative to organise volunteer help.

Previous fundraising trips with the Magna Carta to the US had been very successful and Canon Davis had been banking on lucrative takings at the 1988 World Expo in Brisbane.

But neither Lincoln nor the Magna Carta meant much to Australian tourists and they raised a total of £838.

Canon Davis quickly came into conflict with Dean Jackson after his arrival in Lincoln. The latter moved quickly to investigate the Australian trip.

The result was the beginning of a mutually venomous relationship.

The increasingly public rift prompted a Visitian from the Bishop of Lincoln, the mild-mannered Rt Rev Robert Hardy, which cleared Canon Davis of benefiting personally from the disastrous venture but failed to resolve the feud between the dean and the subdean.

Last summer's disastrous consistory court hearing appeared to be yet another round. After he was cleared, the dean hinted darkly about colleagues who had taken up Verity Freestone's complaint of sexual harassment too readily. — Madeleine Bunting

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When the self pitiful Harvest became the major event of 1972, Young found himself lumped in with singer-songwriters like James Taylor, but where Taylor would continue to plough the same musical patch, Young was merely passing through. Review cover story

4 BRITAIN

News in brief

Pilot 'incoherent after private's death'

THE pilot of an RAF Hercules aircraft which killed an army private on the ground was afterwards in a state of shock and largely incoherent, his senior officer told Bristol crown court yesterday.

Wing Commander Kenneth Bull said Squadron Leader Michael Morrison, aged 42, "was on the point of breakdown, if he had not already been so. He appeared full of remorse and said 'I saw his face'."

"He was mostly in a state of breakdown at that stage." The wing commander was giving evidence on the fourth day of the trial of Morrison, who denies a charge of manslaughter of Private Christopher Game, 22, a single man from Poole, Dorset. In answer to Nigel Pascoe QC, defending, Wing Cdr Bull agreed that up to the accident he had not considered the squadron leader to be a high risk taker, but "a safe pair of hands".

The jury has heard the private was standing upright on the cab of his recovery lorry when the Hercules transport plane made a low level pass at South Cerney military airfield on August 4 1994.

The private was struck by the opened rear freight door and died from massive multiple injuries. The case continues.

Drug girl 'should be freed'

LAWYERS for a teenager held in Italy on suspicion of smuggling \$800,000 of heroin yesterday called for her immediate release.

They said Rome prosecutors had found no evidence against Marianna Platt, 16, of Croydon, south London, who was arrested with her friend Melanie Jackman, 19, at Rome airport last month after 8lbs of heroin was discovered in their baggage.

English-based lawyers fear the Italian authorities could be tempted to keep her in jail as a valuable witness. Stephen Jakobi, director of the human rights group Fair Trials Abroad, said: "We understand that that they are satisfied Marianna is clear of involvement."

Marianna maintains that she believed she was carrying money rather than drugs on a trip from Turkey to Italy.

Our woman in South Africa

A WOMAN is to be Britain's new high commissioner in South Africa, the Foreign Office announced yesterday. Maeva Fort, 45, at present ambassador in Beirut, will succeed Sir Anthony Roseve who is retiring.

Miss Fort said she hoped she got the job on merit rather than because of her sex. "I am sure it will give hope to others that they can make it to the top on merit."

The Foreign Office said that increased female representation in senior posts was one of its priorities. There are now eight women heads of British missions abroad, including Veronica Sutherland, ambassador to Ireland.

Allegations of bias were made against the FO establishment this year when Dame Pauline Neville-Jones, its former political director, resigned after she failed to get the post of ambassador to France. She refused the post of ambassador to Germany. — Richard Norton-Taylor

TV pair's libel payout

TWO television production men are to receive substantial damages from the News of the World over the paper's claims that they were sacked by Michael Barrymore after a drunken orgy in which they "swilled 15 bottles of champagne."

The High Court heard yesterday that the paper said David Croft and Nicholas Badham were sacked while engaged on production of Barrymore's programme, My Kind of People. It also claimed they had "left a hotel bar in a mess and vomited in sinks and beds at the hotel where they were staying."

Solicitor for the two men, Simon Gallant, said the paper had now apologised.

Voice of gardening silenced

CLAY Jones, the former chairman of BBC Radio's Gardeners' Question Time, has died after a heart operation, aged 72. Due to ill health, he retired from the long-running radio series as chairman in 1993, ending a 17-year association with the popular programme.

He also made regular TV appearances on BBC2's Gardener's World and wrote monthly columns for magazines.

Born David Clay-Jones in Cardigan, he fought as a captain with the South Wales Borderers Regiment in Burma during the second world war.

He studied botany at University of Wales, Aberystwyth, and was made an OBE in 1980 for his services to gardening and broadcasting.

Jones joined Gardeners' Question Time as a panellist in 1976, beginning his distinguished broadcasting and journalism career.

He made no secret of his dismay at the BBC's controversial decision to shake up the Radio 4 programme after nearly 50 years. His passion was his 16th century cottage near Chepstow, Monmouthshire. *Obituary, page 10*

ETHIOPIAN SAYING "Without a donkey, you are a donkey"



Donkeys in Ethiopia are the main form of transportation. If these sisters did not own a donkey they would have to carry the water, firewood, harvest and supplies on their own backs.

Our help to the people is practical - free veterinary treatment and advice on animal care is provided through the Ethiopian staff we employ. The donkeys are then healthier, work more efficiently and suffer less.

In addition to travelling to poor areas where our help is needed we are planning to build a purpose-built clinic. Please give whatever you can to fund the work in Ethiopia to help the people and the donkeys.

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Enclose Cheque/Postal Order for £ Name: Mr/Mrs/Miss Address: Post Code

IRA bombers' holiday home

Provos set new terms for ceasefire as police find safe house used by terrorists in Osnabruck attack

Owen Bowcott and David Sharrock

A SAFE house used by the IRA team which launched the multiple mortar bomb attack on the British army barracks at Osnabruck was yesterday being examined by German detectives as the IRA set out fresh conditions for a restoration of its ceasefire.

the "key to a real peace" is in the British and Unionists treating the problem as political rather than as a security issue. "A time frame is essential. A time frame for negotiations is now a well tried and tested method of introducing momentum into any peace process. Everything including constitutional change has to be on the table."

bruck's streets and the Quebec barracks were discovered in the house. There were no injuries in the attack last week, but it caused considerable damage. No descriptions of the members of the Osnabruck cell were released by the prosecutor's office, which also refused to reveal the exact location of the safe house.

lorry, linked to the attack and found at Wildeshausen near Oldenburg, was being investigated by forensic experts. The vehicle, bearing the false British number plate F991 TVN, travelled with the lorry used in the attack from Cork, Ireland, to Le Havre, France, on June 23. It had been seen several times at the holiday home.

Letters DEZ, which was used by the terrorists. The car was spotted along with the van used in the attack near the barracks half an hour before the blast. A senior German detective was yesterday working closely with RUC detectives in Belfast to coordinate the hunt for the IRA active service unit responsible.

sive and a 5lb booster charge were fired at a pair of fuel pumps, which were not in use at the time. Only one shell exploded. The improvised firing installation was screwed to the truck and covered with tarpaulins, to hide the tubes. The mortars were triggered by a timer device in the cab. The federal prosecutor's statement said the terrorists were believed to have visited other houses with the vehicles. Police had already found two vehicles used by the terrorists in Germany, a Daimler-Benz Sprinter lorry and a 7½-ton Iveco lorry.



Fiasco claim over £3.8m Becket cask sale



The 12th century Becket casket, which once held bones of St Thomas à Becket (above left), and which sold yesterday for £3.8m PHOTOGRAPH CHARLES MILLER

Dan Glaster Arts Correspondent

SAINT Thomas à Becket would have spun in his grave if he could have followed the chaos over the sale of his reliquary chest yesterday. The Becket casket, a 12th century enamel chest depicting the murder of Becket, the archbishop of Canterbury, in Canterbury cathedral and which once held some of his bones, was sold at auction for £3.8 million, a week after it could

have been bought for the Victoria and Albert museum for £1.8 million. A London book dealer bidding for an anonymous buyer defeated the National Heritage Memorial Fund, which dropped out at £3.6 million. The casket, which does not qualify for an export block as it has been in the country for less than 50 years, could go abroad. But in a surprise move after the sale, the National Heritage Secretary, Virginia Bottomley, said that the auctioneer's export licence would be modified

to exclude immediate export of the casket — to allow time for "full reflection and consideration". David Barrie, director of the National Art Collections Fund charity, said: "I'm delighted we've got another chance, but it's becoming the biggest fiasco since the Three Graces." There was also concern about the implications of the move for the art market. Lord Rothschild, chairman of the National Heritage Memorial Fund, said: "We made an aggressive bid but as a public institu-

tion we had to impose some discipline on ourselves." The seller was the British Rail pension fund, which bought the casket in 1979 for £500,000. It is understood that the V and A and the NACF, together with the British Museum, where the casket has been on show since 1979, tried to arrange a private sale before it went to auction, but were unable to raise the £1.8 million asking price. The combined bid included a last minute pledge of £50,000 from the widow of T S Elliot, writer

of Murder in the Cathedral. There was annoyance yesterday that more of the £3.6 million the National Heritage Memorial Fund bid had not been made available beforehand. "A week ago the pension fund was willing to sell for substantially less," said Mr Barrie. Under National Lottery rules, the NEMF can offer funds for a purchase only in partnership with an institution. The maximum is 75 per cent of the sale price, leaving the institution to find at least 25 per cent.

But yesterday's bid was made without recourse to lottery money. "There is a fund of last resort with government money which can step in with a grant of 100 per cent," said a spokeswoman for the NEMF. "We bid further than expert advice had advised, and we were bidding against a very determined private bidder." The NEMF came to attention last year when it used lottery funds to buy the Churchill papers from the Churchill family for £13.25 million.

NHS trust beats off private sector challengers to win £27 million hospital contract

Erind Clouston

THE controversial competition for the provision of clinical services to a National Health Service hospital ended tamely yesterday with the award of the £27 million contract to a consortium headed

by an NHS trust. The consortium beat two bids from the private sector. Grampian health board announced that its preferred bid for the construction and operation of a community hospital at Stonehaven, on the northeast coast of Scotland, had come from Grampian health-

care trust and its partners Miller Construction, the private Linen Bank, and the British nursing firm, CHS. Under the terms of the consortium bid, clinical services at the new 49-bed hospital will be run by the trust. Part of the new building will be handed over to CHS,

who will use income from the 90 long-stay and psychiatric beds to pay its share of the hospital's £4 million cost. The Linen Bank will provide the initial capital, part of the PFI's envisaged £700 million supplement to the NHS over the next three years. The possibility of clinical

services being run by either Westminster health care or Lister Bestcare had been viewed with consternation in Scotland where, unlike England and Wales, there has been no government guarantee of excluding the private sector from NHS care. The Grampian health board

contract envisages paying the trust around £2.3 million a year for each of the next 10 years. For this it will "buy" 19 acute beds and an impressive range of specialist outpatient clinics which will include gynaecology, ophthalmology and urology services.

British firms back EU social law

Stephen Bates in Brussels

THE Government suffered a double rebuff in its attempt to limit Europe's influence over Britain yesterday as blue chip companies were shown to be ignoring its opposition to the social chapter and the former cabinet minister, Sir Leon Brittan, derided ministers' attempts to limit the powers of the European Court of Justice.

ered a pre-emptive strike on any government attempts to curb the powers of the court, accusing ministers of pre-election posturing. He told a meeting of the Tory Bow Group at the House of Commons: "Even in a pre-election season it is overwhelmingly in Britain's interests to drop the knocking copy and get on with the serious task of negotiation." "Even in sheer electoral terms that is what will really pay dividends. Voters are not so foolish as some politicians would have you believe."

Such is ministerial concern about encroaching European interference that there have been rumblings at Westminster that the Government will consider defying an upcoming ruling by the European Court which is thought likely to lay down limits on working hours. The ruling is now expected in September. Sir Leon said that the court was essential to regulate free trading conditions as part of

and the National Westminster Bank. Even the privatised British Telecom and the French-based companies which have bought up parts of the privatised water industry, Generale des Eaux and Lyonnaise des Eaux, have set up consultation schemes. Britain was the only member state to opt out of the social chapter. Ministers maintain that the chapter is European meddling in companies' internal affairs and will have a disastrous effect on competitiveness and employment.

Judge claims 'no sex bias' in custody ruling

A CHILD'S place is normally with his mother, not his father, the law lords ruled yesterday. Lord Jauncey, dismissing an appeal over the custody of a four-year-old girl, said it was absurd to suggest that any recognition of the normal mother's natural ability to look after a very young child amounted to sexual discrimination.

if she stayed with his family. That court ruled that it was not in the child's interests to stay with her mother — who had none of her former partner's educational and social advantages — even though the little girl was happy, healthy and well cared for. Lord Jauncey, backed by four other law lords, said the father's appeal raised no question of legal principle and was "devoid of merit". "To ignore entirely the fact that in normal circumstances, a mother is better able than a father to fulfil the needs of a very young child is to ignore what is generally accepted to be reality."

Royal jetty found where Raleigh laid down his cloak for the Queen

Tim Radford Science Editor

ARCHAEOLOGISTS surveying the foreshore of the Thames have discovered the

remains of a Tudor jetty used by Henry VIII, Elizabeth I, and the diarist Samuel Pepys. They found it at low water, exposed after mud had been scoured away by the tide: a set of wooden piles which

would have supported a landing stage for the Tudor palace levelled at the end of the 17th century to make way for the Greenwich Naval College. And according to Gustav Milne, of the Thames Archae-

ology Survey, it is likely to have been on that very muddy jetty that the young Sir Walter Raleigh would have laid down his cloak for Queen Elizabeth to step on, if the story is true

the single market. "You can argue about how far you should go in having common rules, but if you have common rules at all, you cannot live with her 24-year-old mother, who has an older daughter by another man. The father, described by a Scottish court as "combed custody for a time on the basis that his daughter, then 14 months old, would have all the advantages of comfort, education and a strong and stable moral framework"

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السيد جيفري ريس

Hostage found handcuffed to radiator in north London house • Police in China arrest two men as ransom is paid

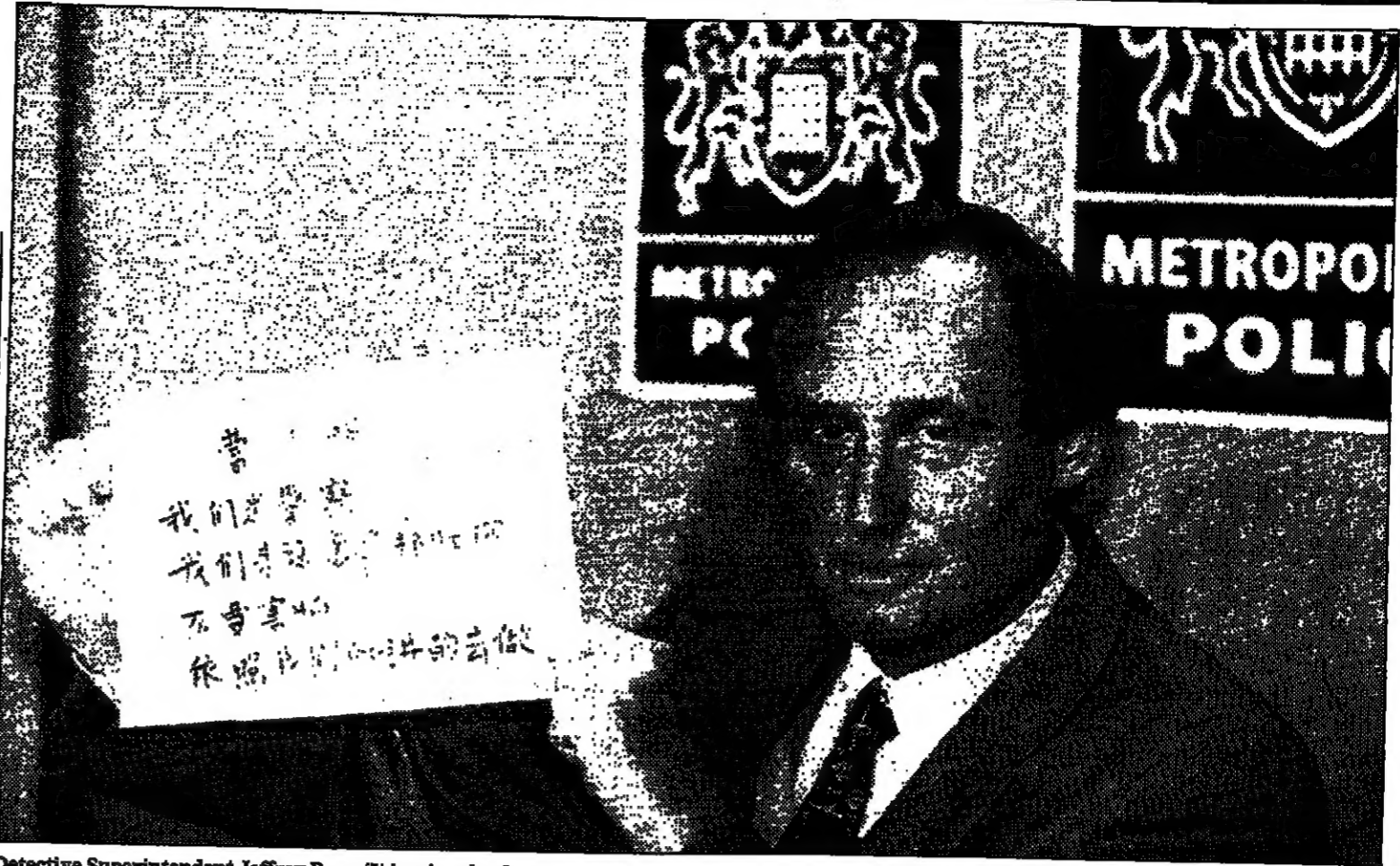
Chinese help Yard free kidnap victim

Duncan Campbell Crime Correspondent

A CHINESE chef who was kidnapped 12 days ago and threatened with mutilation was yesterday found in north London handcuffed to a radiator. His wife, who is in mainland China, had to listen to his cries over the telephone as he was beaten by his kidnappers.

was launched. Two officers flew to China to liaise with their counterparts there. The 19-year-old wife of the victim, Che Zhan, who comes from a farming family, was contacted by the kidnappers and had to listen to the screams of her husband as he was beaten up in London. The kidnappers threatened to cut off his fingers and an arm.

Five Chinese nationals were arrested at the scene. Three other Chinese nationals, all males, were arrested in further operations involving police in Bicester, Oxfordshire, and Dudley, West Midlands. Mr Xiao was being treated in hospital last night for severe bruising and trauma. Detective Superintendent Jeffrey Rees, who led the inquiry, said it had been especially difficult because of the time difference with China and the language problem.



Detective Superintendent Jeffrey Rees: 'It has involved tremendous pressure because we knew one mistake could lead to death' PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN SMITH



Xiao Ming Cao: Wife in China heard his cries over phone

Harmony guide offends Hindus

James Melke Community Affairs Editor

EMBARRASSED council chiefs have scrapped a draft guide designed to promote understanding of ethnic communities' customs and religions after complaints that it was racist and encouraged fundamentalism. Coventry council treasurer Peter Cordle yesterday admitted that the material devised for staff with the help of the council's equal opportunities unit had contained mistakes.

Hindus in Britain may wish to observe the caste system and wish to avoid dining or inter-marriage with members of other castes. But the system had been considerably relaxed among the younger generation. Davinder Prasad, vice-president of the Action Committee for the Campaign Against Caste Discrimination complained: "Instead of portraying caste discrimination as an evil practice legally abolished in India in 1947, this draft document seems to glorify the worst form of racial discrimination."

Railway line bans school's pupils after they 'run riot'

Lucy Manning

PUPILS have been banned from travelling to a secondary school by train after they were accused of vandalising carriages and abusing staff and passengers. All 800 pupils at Mount Grace School, Fotheringhay, North Lincolnshire, have been told they may only travel on the West Anglia Northern Line from next week if they are accompanied by a teacher or parent.

are perfectly reasonably behaved. West Anglia's decision followed an incident on Wednesday night. Stuart Hall, head of retail and customer services for the company, was travelling on the train. He said: "The pupils were extremely unruly. They intimidated passengers on the platform, shoved them as they got on the train, and walked through the carriage verbally abusing passengers. They then entered a first class compartment and tore off the headrests and seat covers." A police spokesman said that following Wednesday's incident, "two pupils were verbally cautioned in front of their headmaster, and the matter is now closed, as far as everyone is concerned."



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After the election the real power struggle will begin - as the Communist-nationalist alliance faces disintegration

# Lebed afraid of missing out on glory

'Russia has chosen the right course. But a bill has been drawn on people's expectations, and it must now be redeemed'

James Meek in Moscow

THE MAN who did more than any campaigner to deliver Boris Yeltsin his critical margin of victory stood on the sidelines awaiting his reward yesterday as his potential rivals in the corridors of power talked coolly of his future role. After a frantic fortnight of press conferences and interviews in which Alexander Lebed spoke volubly about his future role controlling a huge range of government activities, from crime-fighting to economic reform, the former general seemed to have been forgotten by the triumphant Yeltsin camp. He appeared only briefly on Russian television to make a veiled warning to his new patron not to shred his election promises. "Russia has chosen the right course," he said. "But a bill has been drawn on people's expectations, and it must now be redeemed."



Drink to victory... A soft-drink ad is pasted over an election poster showing President Yeltsin and Yuri Luzhkov, mayor of Moscow, yesterday

his support in the run-off. The general seemed to have been forgotten by the triumphant Yeltsin camp. He appeared only briefly on Russian television to make a veiled warning to his new patron not to shred his election promises. "Russia has chosen the right course," he said. "But a bill has been drawn on people's expectations, and it must now be redeemed."

When Mr Yeltsin fell ill last week, Gen Lebed stepped in as a campaign figurehead, suggesting he fill a recreated vice-presidential post, saving the country's powerful oil and gas lobby - personified by the prime minister, Victor Chernomyrdin - and speaking out

on fiscal policy. He has already said he expects Mr Yeltsin to sign a decree turning the security council into a powerful executive body. But with victory comfortably in the bag yesterday, questions about the general's future were answered with evasion and hostility by Mr Chernomyrdin and Mr Yeltsin's chief aide, Viktor Ilyushin. The prime minister, who would become acting head of state if Mr Yeltsin was incapacitated or died, dismissed the idea of reviving the vice-presidency, pointing out it

would need a change to the constitution. "I don't see any special need for this," he said. "I never have delegated any of my powers to anyone, and I won't do that. As for security and order, there will be plenty of work for everyone." Asked about Gen Lebed's recent statements on the powers he expected to receive, Mr Ilyushin spoke of the possibility of "certain communications problems" with new staff. "If Alexander Ivanovich (Lebed) strives to do more for Russia, this is to be welcomed," he said. "As far as powers are concerned, there exist laws governing the work of the security council, there is a government, there is a president who has the right to decide the limits of authorities of this or that official."

Although Gen Lebed's rump campaign team were claiming yesterday that he had delivered 10 million votes to Mr Yeltsin in the second round - roughly equal to the president's margin of victory - the scale of Mr Yeltsin's success might tempt him to belittle the general's role. Gen Lebed is unlikely to stay quiet if he receives such treatment. In his memoirs, I Feel My Country's Shame, he recalls how he was feted as a hero after his part in defeating the 1991 coup and the rage he felt at being manipulated. "I was tortured by the feeling that something big and important had passed me by and I had not seen it, looked at it, understood it. Now it was too late to work it out... I found myself an outsider among these unbridled festivities."



## General won battle of ballots

James Meek in Moscow

BETWEEN the first and second round of Russia's presidential election, the incumbent Boris Yeltsin increased his vote by almost 19 percentage points. The Communist-nationalist challenger, Gennady Zyuganov, boosted his share by a little over eight.

Mr Zyuganov continued to have the edge in parts of Siberia. But the failure of his brand of USSR-nostalgic nationalism to take root in the Far East showed its weakness compared to the "Great Russia" nationalism of Gen Lebed. Mr Yeltsin and Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. Broadly, the north-south, rural-urban split seen in the first round was maintained. The agricultural south and the countryside as a whole, together with areas dominated by the arms industry, voted for Mr Zyuganov. There people find it hardest to survive in a market economy.

## Defeated communists face fight to survive

The party risks tearing itself apart and ending up as a minority group for those on the extreme left. David Hearst reports

THE locomotive that bore Lenin's body from his country retreat in Gorky no longer stands in splendid isolation in the huge hall of Pavlovskiy Station. The hall has become a showroom for expensive foreign cars. Lenin's outstretched finger cannot dictate the party line in central squares in hundreds of provincial cities, where his statue still stands. Such symbols are visibly retreating from the face of Russia. Is the party finally over for those who grew up in the belief that they were building world communism? A smiling, self-confident Gennady Zyuganov last night dismissed any notion that his defeated party would never make a comeback. "Defeat? You mean a party which got in 1993 7 million votes, in 1995 16 million votes, in the first

round of elections this year 24 million votes and yesterday nearly 30 million votes, you call this a defeated party? No. This is a force which any serious politician will have to take seriously," he said. Mr Zyuganov polled those votes as head of an opposition coalition made up of nationalists and communists. His own Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF) is a shaky alliance of social democrats who have all but abandoned their communist faith, nationalists who believe in the restoration of Russia as a "great power", those who are nostalgic for the certainties of the Soviet Union, and extreme left-wingers who believe in the old dogmas. Even yesterday, a faction of nationalists who supported Mr Zyuganov were showing restlessness. Sergei Baburin, leader of the Russian All-Party Union,

said the coalition had existed solely to win the election. Now "further forms of co-operation will have to be discussed." This is not what Mr Zyuganov wants to hear as he settles back into the ranks of what he calls the "responsible opposition". Just to ram the point home, he sent President Boris Yeltsin a telegram congratulating him on his victory. Mr Zyuganov is expected

even the next three months, when they have to pay out all their promises, the unpaid salaries, grants for students and pensions." The danger for the communists is that if Mr Yeltsin strikes the right balance with his new government, the strains within the Communist Party will start to tear it apart. In the long-term, the social democrats will want

ure who does not consider himself a communist, but a patriot. Bankers are not his ideological opponents but his colleagues. "From the moment the bankers invested their money in the national economy - like Menatep, which has begun to invest in the textile industry - they began to defend national interests," he said. If such people go their own way, the Communist Party will soon revert to a minority party of the far left.

### Is the party now finally over for the people who grew up in the belief that they were building world communism?

to play a waiting game, aware that Mr Yeltsin has coalition problems of his own. The Russian president has to deliver not only on his political promises to General Alexander Lebed, but also to the expectant Russian people. "In a devastated country, there are no winners and no losers," Mr Zyuganov said. "Let's see what will be the mood of the rulers in the next three weeks or

to branch out on their own, since no party currently occupies the centre ground. The KPRF is far removed from the post-communist parties of Poland and the rest of Eastern Europe, whose leaders are busy acquiring vast personal fortunes. Alexei Podberioskin, leader of Spiritual Heritage and Mr Zyuganov's right-hand man in the election campaign, is one such fig-

## Take a rest, pleads Naina

Reporter in Moscow

BORIS YELTSIN'S wife Naina said yesterday she had set up nervously waiting for the election results and that she wished he would now take a rest. "He's not a superman, he's a man like everyone else," Russia's first lady, aged 64, told NTV commercial television. Naina admitted earlier this year that she was worried about Mr Yeltsin running for a second term because of heart problems he suffered last year. But she reacted sharply to the interviewer's suggestion that Mr Yeltsin's disappearance from the public eye in the run-up to the second round was a cause for concern. "He was only absent for a day and a half," she said. "Unfortunately he never goes through with his treatment for coughs and colds, never, because he doesn't have time for that. He must rest a bit... These four months were very hard, even younger people who worked with us say they were very tired."

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## News in brief

- Release Kashmir captives, Western countries demand
THE United States, Britain, Germany and Norway yesterday demanded the immediate and unconditional release of four tourists held captive in Kashmir for the past year, writes Richard Norton-Taylor.
"On this, the first anniversary of the kidnapping, we renew our call to Al-Faran for the immediate and unconditional release of our citizens," the four countries said in a joint statement.
Donald Hutchings, an American, Keith Mangan and Paul Wells, both Britons, and Dick Hassert, a German, were kidnapped by Al-Faran militants while trekking in Kashmir.
Britain is continuing to assume that the hostages are alive, the Foreign Office minister, Jeremy Hanley, said yesterday. But a spokesman said there had been no evidence they were alive since August 5 last year.
- Tamil bomber kills 21 others
A Tamil rebel suicide-bomber with explosives strapped to her body threw herself in front of a government motorcade in Jaffna yesterday, killing at least 21 others, a military official said.
At least 50 people were wounded, including a government official, women and children, said Brigadier Sarah Munsinghe, the military's spokesman. - AP.
- Smokers barred
The right to drink in a smoke-filled bar in Toronto will come to an end with a local anti-smoking law, one of the toughest in America, making bars, restaurants and entertainment facilities smoke free by January 1. - Reuter.
- Minestrone design
The smell of minestrone began spreading through the Pompidou Centre yesterday, as part of an exhibition of Gaetano Pese's work, writes Alex Dugat Smith in Paris. The smell, which will linger until October 7, is said to illustrate the Italian designer's view that the world is a minestrone - a mixture of many things.
- Glamour of crime
Sandra Ziliola, aged 24, accused of robbing six banks at gunpoint and dubbed "Sharon Stone" for her good looks, fair hair and tight outfits, was arrested in Campinas, south-eastern Brazil, police said. - Reuter.
- Arctic trick
Tourists who have taken pictures of themselves crossing the Arctic Circle may have to come back and take them over again. The Oslo newspaper Verdens Gang revealed that the Arctic Circle has moved and is now 918 yards north of where they all thought it was. - AP.
- Heatwave blues
Greece took emergency measures to combat a 40C heatwave and air pollution yesterday banning cars from the centre of Athens until tonight and urging people to stay at home. - Reuter.
- Inmates stitch lips in protest
ELEVEN inmates on a hunger strike in a Salvadoran prison have sewn up their mouths to show they are not eating, relatives said this week.
They are among 180 prisoners refusing food to protest against overcrowding in the Santa Ana prison, 40 miles east of San Salvador.
As part of their protest, the inmates are also threatening to execute four comrades who were selected for death in a lottery at the prison last month. The executions are due to go ahead on July 12.
The 11 sewed their lips together "to show that they really are on a hunger strike", a relative said.
Inmates want more prisons to be built and fewer people to be jailed for long periods pending decisions on whether to convict them. The prison, which has a population of 765, has a capacity for 350. - Reuter.

Israeli... by... before U



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# Israeli leader hit by scandal before US visit

Shyam Bhatia in Jerusalem

ISRAEL'S prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, is facing a host of embarrassments as he prepares for what his backers hoped would be a high-profile visit to the United States next week.

Mr Netanyahu's spokesman, Shai Bazak, insisted yesterday that the prime minister has nothing to hide, after opposition MPs demanded to know why the leader appears to have used four different names while living and studying in the US.

According to the Israeli newspaper, Kol Ha'ir, Israel's future leader was shown on a US government file as Benjamin Netanyahu. Benjamin Netai, John Sullivan and John Sullivan Jr.

His Social Security number — the key identification for any resident's dealings with the government on tax and other financial matters — was shared with two real Sullivans, who are US citizens.

The suggestion is that Mr Netanyahu used the aliases to prolong his stay in America. But his Labour party opponents find it suspect that the file unearthed by the newspaper was marked Secret, leading to suggestions that the Israeli leader may have worked for the CIA.

This is not the preface that Mr Netanyahu's advisers were trying to cultivate for him as they seek to create the image of a kosher Camelot. He had promised a Kennedy-style administration brimming with ideas and policy initiatives.

With this week's scandal of his wife throwing out her South African nanny, and reports of his senior cabinet colleagues bossing him around about who should be

in his administration, Mr Netanyahu's leadership is looking ragged after 10 days in office.

Today, Mr Netanyahu will ask the cabinet to create a "ministry of infrastructure" to support Ariel Sharon's government. The prime minister's deputy, David Levy, threatened to resign unless the general was included.

Mr Netanyahu is also being criticised for creating in the White House his own national security advisory team, his own chief of staff and an economics advisory team which — it is feared — will subvert the normal work of cabinet.

Where many Israelis are starting to ask is the best amid the soundbites and pictures of him, his wife Sara and their two young sons. He is coming under increasing pressure, even from within his own party, to say exactly where he stands on the peace process.

Meanwhile, US officials charged with arranging the Netanyahu family visit have reportedly discovered they are required to organise amusements for the Netanyahu offspring, including a trip to the Nasa space centre.

What chills the blood of some Israelis is that Sara — a former air hostess turned child psychologist who is being given her own office next to the prime minister's — may get tips about how to behave like a first lady from Hillary Clinton.

Mr Netanyahu, yesterday accused the Palestine Liberation Organisation of failing to meet its obligation to revoke calls for Israel's destruction from its charter.

The Palestinians retorted that Israel was the one violating signed agreements between them.

# Jonathan Freedland in Arlington sees Independence Day come early for 68 new US citizens

## From ethnic fruit salad to American pie

IT IS hard to sing with a lump in your throat, but somehow they managed it. Their right hand over their heart, their English broken, they sang out the anthem of their new country. "Oh, say, can you see, by the dawn's early light," all the way to the most rousing of climaxes — "The land of the free, and the home of the brave."

The 68 men and women crammed into the ceremony room of the United States Immigration and Naturalisation Service's Arlington branch, had waited for this moment for years. Today they would become US citizens.

The faces were as diverse as the country they were joining: an old Vietnamese man, a young Dutch blonde, a black Muslim woman, a Scottish house-

wife — every one a new American.

Each day at 4pm the same ritual takes place in this room and in rooms like it all across America — naturalising 1.2 million immigrants last year alone. Grants was booming this week in the run-up to the Fourth of July celebrations.

They were ushered into Room 507 by a clerk calling out "Welcome, new citizen!" like a real-life Lady Liberty. There were so many that accompanying spouses had to be kept out, filling the corridor outside. But one man squeezed through to take a picture of the Albanian boy, aged six, his daughter had adopted. The beaming grandfather presented the child with a balloon, marked with stars and stripes.

An official took the register, which sounded like a roll-call at the United Nations. An Abdullah and a Fernando, a Murphy and a Kim. He checked that they had all gone through the requisite interview, where

The new citizens had swooped up on all this in advance, thanks to a government manual explaining the basics of American civics, history and culture — including pictures of the Liberty Bell and the Lin-

coln Memorial, and little quizzes to test their knowledge. They were told to put all that democratic learning to good use and register to vote.

But now it was time to say the magic spells that would transform this ethnic fruit salad into American pie. The district director, William Carroll — a second-generation American, half-Irish, half-Italian — delivered a surprisingly touching speech.

"This is a wonderful day," he said. "Really a new birthday, a re-birth to a new homeland. America would offer them freedom they could not find anywhere else, he said, and people like them had made the country great."

He recalled his grandfather who used to say: "I could have gone to Spain but I could never have become Spanish; I could have gone to England but I could never have become an Englishman." But, Mr Carroll continued, "he truly became an American in the 1890s, as you will truly become an American today."

The 68 stood and recited the oath of allegiance, renouncing previous loyalty to "any foreign prince, potentate, state or sovereignty". They said the pledge of allegiance to the flag, were each handed their certificates of naturalisation, and wished a wonderful Fourth of July.

Janice Green from Doncaster said she felt more emotional than she had expected — that she now realised it was "goodbye England". Brigitte D'Antonio from Holland was happy that she was now part of the "best country" in the world. Fatjon, the Albanian, played with his balloon.

As they left, Mr Carroll's words hung in the air: "It's hard to believe," he had said, "that you are Americans." For these new Americans, it was their very own Independence Day.

They were ushered into Room 507 by a clerk calling out 'Welcome, new citizen!', like a real-life Lady Liberty



Militant cabbies... Protesters march during a strike by more than 150,000 taxi drivers in Bombay yesterday against the transport authority's refusal to allow fare increases in line with a rise in petrol prices

# Drug runners find El Dorado in Orinoco delta

## One man and his broken boat must patrol Venezuela's cocaine highway, John Wade in Tucupita reports

WHEN Columbus stumbled upon the intricate maze of channels, creeks and islets that make up the Orinoco delta he thought he had discovered a paradise on earth.

"Today, it's a drug traffickers' paradise," Johan Obdola, the director of the regional office of Venezuela's national anti-drug commission, says bluntly.

Tucked away in the eastern extremes of Venezuela where the Orinoco River fans out into the Atlantic Ocean, Tucupita, the capital of Delta Amacuro state, is a sleepy place.

About 70,000 of the state's 104,000 inhabitants live in the capital. Warao Indians, who make up most of the rest, are scattered in isolated settlements across the delta's vast expanse of wetlands. Just beyond Tucupita, the roads end.

Some 500 years ago the labyrinthine delta drew Sir Walter Raleigh to delirium in his abortive search for the gold of El Dorado.

These days, where the freshwater dolphins, exotic vegetation and stilt dwellings of the Warao begin so does a thriving drug-trafficking route to the US and European cocaine markets, says Mr Obdola.

He estimates that about 15 tons of cocaine a year is smuggled in launches through the delta's 3,000 channels, which open into some 250 outlets to the sea.

There is little effort at prevention and even less evidence of how much cocaine is getting through. Last year, 6.2 tons of cocaine was seized in Venezuela, yet officials acknowledge this is probably a fraction of the real problem.

According to Mr Obdola, the cocaine travels from Colombia by air, land and water across Venezuela and Brazil to strategic distribution points close to the delta. From there, the drugs are ferried through the delta to nearby Trinidad to the north and neighbouring Guyana to the east.

"It's a perfect exit route," he says. "The traffickers are highly organised, they're always one step ahead and there's no government action plan."

He complains of his paltry annual budget of about \$14,000. His phone line has been cut off because of an unpaid bill and, in a state that is 60 per cent water, his only launch needs repairing. The craft used by the local police and national guard are also regularly out of action.

Tucupita's residents are equally keen to expose the "narco" boom over the past 10 years. The main morning news item on local radio reports a case in which 1.7kg of cocaine "disappeared" from a Tucupita courtroom.



been enlisted by the drug traffickers as guides, mules and store depots.

"They collaborate more with the narco than they do with us. In return, they give them food, money and rum."

Some locals have become rich overnight. He cites the case of a cinema doorman who flaunts a new-found wealth. There are also the members of a Tucupita family who gave up labouring jobs to buy a cattle ranch near the town. A recent confidential report details their phone bills last year running at more than \$3,000 a month, with frequent calls to Colombia and the US.

Mr Obdola worries about the quantity of drugs that slip through and his problems following up intelligence leads. An investigation that uncovered but failed to stop a 3,000kg shipment led to members of Venezuela's military and political elite, he says.

Father Xelir Nino, a priest for 23 years at a Capuchin mission in a remote Warao community eight hours by boat from Tucupita, is concerned about the drug trade's impact on the Indians.

"The Indians are very pious, but when they drink they get violent. If they're like that with rum, they'll be finished if they start consuming cocaine."

# Saudis on royal road to ruin



Other worlds

Leslie Plommer

SAUDI ARABIA has been on a quest for security ever since it became a unified state 54 years ago. Yet its rulers have been missing the obvious: they have searched far, but not near enough; they have searched high, but not low enough.

The lorry bomb that killed 19 United States military personnel at King Abdul Aziz Air Base near Dhahran last week was the sort of wake-up call that might rouse a government to reassess the meaning of real security. In the Arab world, the opposite is likely.

Hence the humming of phone lines between Riyadh and Washington, and the activation of at least 70 FBI agents and many more Saudi officers to investigate the bombing.

And always, in the background, the whirring of Saudi intelligence agencies' computers, searching out the usual suspects.

All this activity will almost certainly lead to arrests. It may even lead to the arrests of the guilty men, although international opinion is likely to remain sceptical of any confessions unless the FBI takes part in the interrogations — a role refused them in the case of the four executed on May 31 for last November's bombing of a US-run military training centre in Riyadh.

However, the US says it has won permission — denied after the November attack — to push back the perimeter fence to at least 400ft from the outer buildings at the Dhahran military housing complex, where roughly half of the 5,000 American troops are stationed.

Washington and Riyadh have offered between them \$3.3 million in reward money for information leading to the capture and conviction of the bombers.

Fences, rewards, computers, forensic teams and roadblocks: the Riyadh government and its American ally are throwing all the resources they have at a criminal case where success can only yield a new crop of executed martyrs to be avenged by a new squad of bombers.

Security, in short, lies anywhere but in the security apparatus where the two countries are concentrating their efforts. Even so, there appears to be no change in the kingdom's historical policy of seeking safety afar in foreign garrison armies and foreign weapons, and at home in the maintenance of an extensive security apparatus under the direction of a tiny elite.

Saudi calculations have forgotten where the security of a country actually lies — in the hearts and allegiance of ordinary people.

In a country where the ruling family is the central political institution, with a near-monopolistic hand on power and wealth, most citizens remain spectators, apparently deemed unfit for a fully adult role.

It is this suppression of civic life which produces the situation in which Saudi Arabia now finds itself, where politics, in the words of the writer Fouad Ajami, "has been driven into the mosque."

After the Dhahran blast the Saudi defence minister, Prince Sultan bin Abd Aziz Saud, declared: "The kingdom is not influenced by threats."

Why not? The presumed message of the bombers — that foreign armies are unwelcome and that the House of Saud needs reform — has support throughout Saudi society, even among the monarchy who wish the ruling family to remain in some form.

The country's pale ghost of a consultative assembly — appointed by King Fahd after decades of broken promises by his predecessors — is filled with worthy men but remains more an example of rule by an elite than a vehicle for popular participation.

That the public cannot visit the assembly to hear its debates and the press cannot attend to report them are indicators of how remote from the people this elite institution is.

Even neighbouring Kuwait has had to shelve a plan to broadcast the proceedings of its more robust elected parliament because the Saudi rulers deem this would be too dangerous.

And there the conundrum lies: so long as public debate and participation are equated with subversion, all the king's money and all Washington's men cannot secure Saudi Arabia.

# Weary Kabul expects the worst

## The man who pounded the city for years has no regrets after being sworn in as PM for a second time, writes Gerald Bourke

MINUTES before Gulbuddin Hekmatyar was sworn in for the second time as Afghanistan's prime minister, a senior member of his Hezbe Islami party spoke of its attempts to persuade the Taliban Islamic militia to silence the artillery which had pounded Kabul all day, killing and maiming more than 200 civilians.

"We sent them a message of peace, asking them to agree to a ceasefire," Qaribur Saed declared. "We told them the people of Kabul are the people of Afghanistan and the only way to end the war is to negotiate a settlement."

It was another example of the hypocrisy that comes so easily to the leaders of the warring factions, and instils such loathing in the ordinary people they claim to represent.

Four years ago, Islamic factions seized Kabul from an embattled Communist regime. They soon turned their guns on each other and Hezbe was driven out by the combined armies of Burhanuddin Rabbani, the spiritual head of Janat Islami, and Rashid Dostam, a powerful ethnic Uzbek from the north.

For the next three years, Hezbe, ultimately backed by General Dostam's once pro-Communist mercenaries, indiscriminately bombarded the capital to try to dislodge Jamaat. They only succeeded in killing tens of thousands of Kabul's residents and reduc-

ing swaths of the city to rubble. During much of this time, Mr Hekmatyar was officially prime minister, but never dared to enter Kabul.

Early last year he fled from his main base, south of Kabul, in fear of a confrontation with the advancing Taliban, and was effectively reduced to the status of a local commander.

Then last month, he struck a deal with President Rabbani. It not only paved the way for his restoration as prime minister, but rescued him from the brink of political and military extinction.

"This man is responsible for the deaths of thousands of people and the destruction of our city," said a surgeon at one of the city's few functioning hospitals, echoing a sentiment widely felt across the capital. "It's absurd."

All the so-called leaders use the slogans of Islam, but their soldiers systematically kill, rape and plunder.

From the safety of a bullet-proof jeep, deep in a convoy of pick-ups packed with heavily armed henchmen, the prime minister has witnessed for the first time the devastation wrought by his forces. But there has been no apology.

Excuses, though, are plentiful, and Mr Saed had one ready. "We never fired first, we only retaliated when we came under attack," he claimed with a brazenness typical of the country's power-hungry leaders.

There have been no protests since Mr Hekmatyar's arrival. "Demonstrations would be useless," said the surgeon. "We don't even have the right to life, so we are reduced to worrying about how we can nourish and house our families."

Relief workers say half of Kabul's 1.2 million people do not have adequate food or shelter. The prices of staples continue to soar and beggars are everywhere — many of them women who have lost their husbands to the rockets which pounded the city.

"I have no doubt the war will resume with a vengeance," said Herat Khan, an elderly man queuing outside the city's only orthopaedic centre with a grandson who lost both legs in a rocket explosion. There were murmurs of agreement from others waiting to be fitted with artificial limbs.

In public at least, both the president and prime minister will resume with a vengeance. They have launched separate charm offensives, ostensibly aimed at wooing rival armies.

The intransigent Taliban militia, who have vowed to rid the country of all other fighting factions and establish a pure Islamic state, refuse to be swayed. "We have had enough of their lies," said one of their commanders during an artillery exchange. "The only solution is to fight."

**A mischievous tale has reached the Loafer's ear that one of the Booker judges recently effected some very practical criticism of Melvyn Bragg's Credo: defenestration is the technical term, apparently.**

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won ballots

## Blueprint for Britain

### Labour should stake out its own terms

KBIR HARDIE himself would have signed up to Labour's new manifesto, said Tony Blair at yesterday's launch. "Hm. Not sure about that one, Tony. Yet, quibbles of that sort aside, there is no doubt that the document which Mr Blair launched succeeds in setting out a meaty and vernacular Labour programme for government. This is a well-written document, strong on nice lines and good language. But there is nothing sinister in that, and there is much of substance too. It is a substantial programme, as last night's malicious Conservative castings underline. Those who feared — as well as those who hoped — that Labour had abandoned its historic aspiration to be a party of all the people will have been disappointed. Whatever reservations many may have about the document's contents and the quality of the consultative exercise on which Labour will now embark, it is hard to see how more than a handful of the membership can vote against it in the autumn.

Inevitably, given that this is an interim document and not the final programme on which Labour will fight the election, Mr Blair's tone is more finished than his detailed commitments. It is not, the Labour leader pointedly said, the last word. The crucial taxation section of Labour's manifesto, for one, remains to be written, and serious arguments are still taking place inside the party about that. But the document contains plenty of important words, and the impression which many have gained (and some have encouraged) that Labour is overwhelmingly concerned with tailoring its appeal to a narrow band of essentially Thatcherite swing voters would be hard to sustain in the light of it this morning. Too much of the rhetoric and positioning of this draft manifesto are recognisably in the Labour grain for that. We are back as the party of the people, said Mr Blair.

It is about you, he said, about the many not the few, about the hard-working majority. It is a rediscovery of the best of Labour. Words not substance, yes, but important and good words all the same.

Not even Labour's tireless spin doctors are trying to claim that the draft manifesto contains new specific changes or commitments. Yesterday's "five early pledges" — on education, law and order, health, welfare-to-work and control of public spending — have been well rehearsed in Labour's seemingly endless policy launches. But the Labour document is more than the sum of its parts. It contains all the bricks which have been fashioned over recent months, but it puts them together into a structure which is immediately recognisable as a progressive reformist blueprint for Britain, wholly distinct from the philosophy and policy of the Conservative Party. It is always easy to say that the Labour Party under Mr Blair has become disturbingly similar to the Conservatives, and sometimes the charge seems worryingly close, but no one who reads the new document can seriously make such a claim.

There came a moment in yesterday's launch when Mr Blair was challenged (by our Political Editor, as it happens) to acknowledge that this is actually a rather big and ambitious programme. Suddenly, Mr Blair became animated and enthusiastic in a way which earlier, doing his responsible, toughly truthful and trustworthy bit, he had not been. This is radical, ambitious and realisable, he said. It was a moment which gave a glimpse of how liberating it could be for speakers and audience alike if Labour, instead of trying not to make mistakes, decides to set its own terms. Yesterday we got a glimpse of how the post-Conservative political debate might look. It looked good. Now let's have a lot more.

## Better the devil they know

### Yeltsin should build bridges: but not with Lebed

BORIS YELTSIN is back by a margin which overnight appears to have vanquished all sorts of demons, and has even restored a degree of vitality to the victor himself. With no evidence of significant rigging, the voting may be judged reasonably fair. The persistent bias of most of the Russian media, heavily influenced from the Kremlin, is another matter. But the gap between Mr Yeltsin and the communist candidate Gennady Zyuganov was so wide that it is doubtful whether more balanced coverage could have reversed the outcome — though it might have narrowed the margin. In the end, a majority of voters was more worried by the potential "return of communism" — whatever that might actually mean — than by the actual defects and disasters of life under the current regime. Hardworking foreign correspondents in Moscow may have failed to produce many Yeltsin enthusiasts to give a positive gloss, but they did find plenty of voices explaining why they voted against his opponent. Worries about Mr Yeltsin's state of health counted for more abroad than among the electorate — if only because the Russian press avoided saying too much about it. Mr Zyuganov's own campaign was not a great success and his second round performance seemed to convey the expectation of defeat: however much he dissociated himself from the substance of past policies, his style still conveyed an unhappy whiff of the Party reformer which — no Gorbachevite reformer

— he was in the Soviet years. Yet the most compelling explanation for Mr Yeltsin's victory remains the one suggested by our correspondent David Hearst at the start of the election: most Russians prefer to carry on with the gang now in power than invite a new bunch to move in on the turf.

A relieved Bill Clinton, quickly followed by such authoritative commentators as the Nato secretary-general, were quick to declare that the result was a victory for democracy. Does that mean that a different result in favour of Mr Zyuganov, if achieved by exactly the same process, would have been something quite different? It would be prudent to throttle back the applause and wait to see what happens. If Mr Yeltsin regains his health for sufficient time to function effectively, he has two immediate tasks. The first is to cut down to size the very man he has only just elevated — ex-general Alexander Lebed who has been spattering out his alarming views on the economy. General Pinochet, Mormons, Jews, and his own claim to the (as yet non-existent) post of vice-presidency. The second is to decide what to do about the substantial minority vote for Mr Zyuganov — whose arguments had already influenced the president's second-round platform. Popular unhappiness over unemployment, prices, corruption and crime, will not go away. An effort to build bridges with this substantial body of dissent — if not the outright coalition suggested by Mr Zyuganov — needs to be made.

## Manifesto misdemeanours

### Politicians should pay the price of shattered promises

A COURT in Nancy, eastern France, has fined a regional councillor for "usurping votes with false promises" after he pledged himself to create 310 new jobs but failed to provide them. If this law can apply in Nancy, why not in Britain, home of the Citizen's Charter? To levy appropriate penalties, the Government could establish an Ofwat-type Office of Promises Insufficiently Satisfied, Subtly Evaded, or Dumped, for which someone could no doubt find an appropriate acronym.

Since the present lot have been in power for 17 years, their fines would be spectacular. Suppose we assess at a modest £1 billion a wealth of minor betrayals — disappointing hopes of a big reduction in crime, saying they'd speed up roadbuilding only to slash it, increasing overcrowding in prisons when they'd promised to cut it, etc. — and concentrate on spectacular lapses. Suggesting they'd cut unemployment,

for instance, which then tripled: scoring that at £100 per extra lost job would yield £200 million. Denying they planned to double VAT, but then doing so, warrants a similar penalty. Defining ERM membership as essential to their anti-inflation strategy, and then taking us out: a 10 per cent fine for the £5 billion they poured down the drain in that crisis, and there's another £500 million. Promising tax cuts, only to push taxes up by some £1.75 billion: a 10 per cent fine for that would yield another £175 million. Add it all up, and by a happy coincidence, the fines to be paid by Major and co. would more than cover the £2 billion they say they can't find to deal with our prisons.

Unrealistic? Not necessarily. Ask focus groups if they'd approve of this exercise, and they'd back it with acclamation. Which makes it a little surprising that it isn't already enshrined in Labour's new manifesto.



## Letters to the Editor

### The real cost of MPs' pay rise

GIVEN the size of proposed pay increases for MPs and ministers, we are surprised that the Government has not tested their impact on unemployment by running the proposal through the Treasury's computer model of the economy ("Double standard" for MPs, July 4). After all, that is the traditional government practice when minimum wages for the lowest paid are discussed, with the assumption built in that all workers try to restore differentials.

Using the Government's traditional approach, we guess that a 25 per cent pay increase for MPs will lead to 3 million job losses if differentials are restored, while a 49 per cent hike for ministers will destroy over 5 million posts. If wage bargainers succeed in maintaining differentials with the Prime Minister, who is likely to get a 70 per cent rise, that's a staggering 11 million jobs could go.

The real doomsday scenario would be if wage negotiators tried to obtain the full MPs' package — including unregulated working, long holidays, enhanced pension rights, free transport and the option of pursuing a range of other careers in working time. Then we have the potential

of a very ugly prospect of no one being left in employment at all, with the exception of the MPs themselves, the executive of Yorkshire Water and Richard Girolano, the latter having to survive solely on part-time work with British Gas.

Surely the grave consequences of these pay increases, calculated as they are on the basis of the Government's own highly sophisticated approach to the impact of pay bargaining, ought to give MPs food for thought when they debate the issue.

Jonathan Fry, Director, Yorkshire & Humberside Low Pay Unit, 102 Commercial Street, Batley WF17 5DP.

ISN'T it time MPs' salaries were subject, like everyone else's, to market forces? The burden of members' remuneration should be removed from the taxpayer and placed on those who voted directly for them. As most of us vote for a party rather than an individual, it would be sensible to leave personal salaries out of general elections altogether. After each constituency has decided which party should represent it, at their expense, candidates claiming allegiance to the

winners could step forward for election to the available seat. The one offering to serve at the lowest cost would have a considerable advantage and would — by current economic logic — be far more efficient. Take heart Britons, the first home secretary on supplementary benefit could well be near at hand.

Dave Jason, 44 Shirley Road, Fromeantle, Southampton SO15 3EU.

I SUGGEST any MPs' salary increase be funded in a similar way to that imposed on public sector workers such as nurses and teachers. The Government will increase MPs' salary by inflation and then allow individual constituencies to "top-up" this award by whatever amount they think appropriate for their particular "market" in political representatives. The constituencies could then consider such factors as productivity, supply of prospective MPs etc, or even "renegotiate" the terms of employment of their MP, with any award being dependent on an increase in the number of hours worked. I am sure all the Tory MPs would be more than happy with such an arrangement after all they have enthusiastically endorsed such procedures for other public sector workers. It goes without saying that any extra salary thus granted would have to be financed by the constituents themselves, but I am sure that if MPs are considered to be half as worthwhile as they consider themselves to be, their constituents would be more than happy to fund the extra 27 per cent or so above inflation proposed at present.

(Dr) M N Perkins, 10 Fitzroy Gardens, London SE19 2NP.

MAY I suggest that articles on parliamentary pay should include as footnotes the pay of the writer and of the editor? When David Hencke includes quotations from Christine Hancock and David Hart, could he ask them why the general secretary of the Royal College of Nursing should now have to take a pay cut if she became Secretary of State for Health and why the head of Holland Park school would lose over £25,000 as a member of parliament? If an MP is not worth the money, it might be better to improve the MP rather than cut the pay. Peter Bottomley MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

### In a class of their own

IT IS surprising to read the claim from independent school heads that there is a prejudice by universities against those applicants coming from their schools (Universities accused of bias, July 3). Researchers at the Policy Studies Institute studied all 500,000 applications to universities in 1992. After statistically controlling for A level performance they found that the probability of obtaining a university place is significantly increased by going to a selective school and having parents in a professional or managerial occupation. It is young people from working class and comprehensive school backgrounds that appear to face particular barriers.

This is not new, of course. What is new is that ethnic minority applications and admissions to universities are high. This is because they stay on at 16 in large numbers (at rates 30 per cent higher than for white young people) and because they make strenuous efforts within the education system. Up to now such efforts have not been rewarded with labour market success. That is a much bigger problem than the one the independent schools seem to think they have. (Dr) David Drew, (Honorary Research Fellow in Education, Sheffield University) Senior Lecturer in Statistics, Sheffield Hallam University, Pond Street, Sheffield S1 1WB.

FOLLOWING your reporting of our survey into the university admissions process for our pupils, we would like to point out that the complaints of anti-independent school bias were a tiny element of the survey, and not the reason for this research. The survey showed that for the majority of students the university admissions process worked very well. However, our pupils encountered some difficulties including rejection, without interview, of good candidates; poor interviewing procedures; and delays in universities' responses to candidates who had applied in good time. We are confident that these difficulties are experienced by all schools, not just those in the independent sector. Margaret Rudland, President, Girls' Schools Association, Tony Evans, Chairman, Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference, 130 Regent Road, Leicester LE1 7PG.

## Sold on canvas

MARK Lawson underestimates the individuality of members of the public (Commentary, July 1), or at least those we expect will visit the Art Supermarket at Harvey Nichols. Buying art may be a minority activity but I suspect this says rather more about his attitude and the tired, ritualistic way in which it is sold than it does about buyers' tastes or self-confidence.

Painting is distressingly easy to produce, writes Lawson, and assumes the skill to be nearly general. What sort of a bit of practice and almost anybody can write a newspaper article, strum a guitar or hit a tennis ball. The trick is to do it with skill and originality — at which point the whole thing becomes distressingly difficult.

I do not agree that with painting we are all bound to the idea that price equals quality. In my experience, people are increasingly aware of where the price is work of art traditionally comes



from — a straightforward formula whereby expensive gallery space, staff, catalogues and PR combine with a low sales rate to produce high prices. With the Art Supermarket, we are simply trying to strip art sales of the extraneous baggage — whilst maintaining quality. We believe that many people will see exactly what we are up to and approve.

James West Fine Art, 28 Islington Park Street, London N1.

MARK Lawson finds painting disarmingly easy to produce. I wish all my stu-

dents found it so easy. A Fine Art graduate said recently that she came to learn skills but left making work from a personal perspective — she, unlike Lawson, understood the difference between skill and art.

At Harvey Nichols, as at most other venues, no doubt artists will continue to provide free entertainment on a sale or return basis. But it ain't that easy. Margaret Rudland, Senior Lecturer in Charge of Painting, University of Sunderland, Unit 4, Technology Park, Chester Road, Sunderland SR2 7PS.

## Hot water battle

THE Government tells us that in 25 years time, due to climatic change, summer water shortages in the South and East will become normal (Long range weather forecast: hot, dry and French, July 3). If even with this much notice they don't believe the private water companies can provide a decent service, surely now's the time to re-nationalise.

D. Green, 55 Guernsey House, Clephane Road, London N1 2TR.

SO, YORKSHIRE will be the Sun Garden of England in 25 years — not if nobody's allowed to water it. William Barrett, 6 Burns Road, London NW10 4DY.

AT LAST some sense from John Gummer. Would he consider securing his place in history by proposing a millennium project worthy of the name — the John Selwyn Gummer National Water Grid? Noel S Livesey, 23 Stankett Road, Carlforth LA5 0TF.

## An audience with the jury

WE ARE concerned at the level of vitriol in John Mullin's diatribe against the Sara Thornton film, *Killing Me Softly* (Trial and error, July 2). Having seen the film ourselves we found it a profound, moving and sensitive treatment of a difficult story which can only widen the debate about addictive relationships, alcohol abuse, domestic violence and society's attitude to these issues.

For a writer (who is not a film critic) to attack a TV film in this way before audiences have had a chance to see it and make up their own minds is simply unfair. Such an overwhelmingly negative and angry reaction suggests strongly that the film has touched a very raw nerve in your writer. Those who lash out in this extraordinary un-objective way show how profoundly they have been threatened.

The Sara/Malcolm Thornton story is a many-sided one and all facets of it are explored in the film we saw in a thoughtful and fair manner. The film maker and the BBC should be congratulated, not castigated, for giving audiences the chance to enter the

debate. We urge readers to give this potential place the chance it surely deserves. Anna Reynolds, Richard Brown, 14 Bedford Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 3BQ.

JOHN Mullin suggests I should have sat on the press benches during Sara Thornton's appeal. For the record, I sat in the only space available in the public gallery as I was on maternity leave and attending the court as an observer.

My book on Sara Thornton has been attacked as partial by those who wish to vilify Thornton. It is in fact contains much that is less than favourable to Thornton. Further, its main contention has now been confirmed by the Court of Appeal and by a jury at Thornton's second trial. Jennifer Nadel, Home Affairs Editor, ITN, 200 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8XZ.

Letters to the Editor may be faxed on 0171 837 4530 or sent by post to 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER, and by e-mail to letters@guardian.co.uk.

## Unwarranted

MICHAEL Howard is right to want to subject police budgets to statutory control, but wrong not to require the police to obtain warrants from the courts (Howard sets statutory code for police bugs, July 3). The need for greater accountability was clearly called for by two of the law lords (Law Lords uphold police use of secret listening device, July 3).

Currently, bugging is regulated solely by Home Office guidelines which require approval by a senior police officer. However, such intrusive powers should be subject to prior scrutiny by the courts, particularly in the absence of a right to privacy in this country. To search a person's home, the police need a warrant from a magistrate or a circuit judge, not a search warrant for lesser controls over bugging.

These issues will be considered by the European Commission of Human Rights in a case brought by Liberty (Goveil v UK) after Mr Goveil, whilst rearranging his furniture, discovered a surveillance device protruding through his lounge wall from the house next door. Philip Leach, Liberty, 21 Tabard Street, London SE1 4LA.

## A Country Diary

GLOUCESTERSHIRE: Growing conditions so far this year have been, to say the least, unusual. A cold spring slowed the growth of grass and then the sudden combination of warmth and rain produced an extraordinarily rapid growth. By mid June our flock of Herdwicks were not keeping up with the growth of grass. Sheep only eat a short bite, knee high grass is no good to them, so I had to get out the heavy machinery which, set high, will top the meadow grass with rotating flails and, incidentally, makes a crop of hay. This job usually becomes necessary in late July but, showing a sensitive appreciation of the situation, we set work and, over four evenings, cut, dried, and stored a good load of hay. The asparagus, now finished, did seem to benefit from the late growth spurt but the unusual conditions have clearly stressed the trees. The one which seems most troubled this year is not the willow, which always shows signs of uncase in warm summer weather, but a mature red horse chestnut

which stands at the roadside in the corner of our land. In May, at flowering time, it is a sensational sight. The erect candles of the horse chestnut come into flower and their strawberry pink colour make a splendid spectacle. This year the ground below the widespread canopy of the tree is littered with thousands of tiny immature green pods that would, had they stayed on the tree, have become the conkers of the autumn. And it's not just the vegetation which is behaving abnormally. Two months after the flock had lambed — by which time spring lambs are pretty solid young beasts — one of last year's lambs, young May, showed signs of distress. Mid June this was, on a day of wind and rain. She was expensively delivered by the vet of a tiny lamb which survived less than a day. We certainly tried — at one stage of the night, to try and get its body temperature up to normal, it was sharing our bed. All efforts failed — our only lambing casualty of this year. COLIN LUCKHURST



Diary  
Matthew Norman

THOSE who view advertising as an absurdly self-important trade will be intrigued to learn of a forthcoming speaking engagement. J Walker Thompson is holding a "masterclass" on Tuesday, and the teacher is Max Clifford. "I'll be telling all those eager young people what PR is all about," says Max. "It's all lies and deception... exactly the same as advertising." This sounds fun. "Yes, and I'll be telling them who's shagging who—that's public relations—which is what they really want to know: I've got a nice little tale for them about a star with a hairnet fetish. In fact, it'll be a masterclass in amorality." Organiser Suzi Hunt asks us not to take the invitation as a sort of approval for Max's open relationship with the stark truth. "I'm sure that'll face some very stern questions at the end," she says.

MOVING to another planet of PR, we congratulate Sir Tim Bell on his recent Polly Partillo's adviser. First he coached Polly in the lunatic SAS speech to Conference; and now it is Sir Tim, we gather, who told Polly that dogging army homes was the way to rebuild his popularity. "He may not be working for Partillo," says one observer, "but I reckon it's John Redwood who's paying the bill."

FROM the Police Complaints Authority we hear the story of unlucky Mr S, who parked outside a police station before going in to produce his driving documents. On returning to his car, however, he saw that he'd locked his keys inside it and went back for assistance. An officer lent him a wire coat hanger and back out to the car he went... but not, alas, for long; while he was fiddling with the hanger, a van load of coppers turned up and escorted Mr S back inside on suspicion of trying to pick his own car. An irate Mr S was then arrested on a public order charge, and—despite the explanations of the officer who lent him the hanger—was detained for what is described as an "excessive period". Helmets off, everyone!

AND so to another police triumph, and the gorgeous incident last week in which some 50 officers—rooftop marksmen included—and a helicopter surrounded a Kurdish community centre in north London after a report involving handguns. These were stage props in a performance of Harold Pinter's short play Mountain Language, and Mr Pinter was so touched to learn that the group was doing the play that he is going to see tomorrow night's performance at Hoxton Hall in east London—one that will conclude with a version of last week's police fiasco. So then, this is an APB to all units—repeat, all units—in the east London area: if you see some chaps with guns on a stage being surrounded by other chaps in police uniforms, leave well alone.

SANE and rational Paul Johnson is too bashful to admit it, but he is indeed responsible, so it seems, for Mr Tony Blair's flirtation (heavy petting, perhaps) with Roman Catholicism. A mutual friend of the two reports that they meet often; that Tony takes Paul very seriously indeed—no, really, this is absolutely straight; and that Paul describes Tony's conversion as his dearest wish. What attracts the two men is obscure, although Tony is thought to admire Paul's ready wit and soothingly, while Paul has always been a fan of disciplinarians.

TERRY Major-Ball rings, with thanks for the champagne and, as a 63th birthday card, and some musings on the female sex. "My favourite aspect of a young lady tends to be her legs," he confides, "because everything else can be disguised." He pauses to collect his thoughts. "Might I be so crude as to mention busts? You can get a padded bra that would kid all the men that you're 'at the front of the queue', as my mother put it, but good legs are a lady's greatest asset." And upon this contentious note, we say our farewells.

# Foot faults in the devolution rematch

## Commentary Peter Preston

EVERY Wimbledon seems like the last one because the essential cast of characters, and script, never changes. Old British players don't fade away; they return, year upon year, as commentators from pre-Britain history. Christine and Virginia and Sue and Anabel and Roger and Angela's husband, John—memories of a distant and modestly successful past sealed in the warm warp of time. Henman, you dimly know, will be there with the mikes 20 years on as the same yellow balls potter back and forth beneath his BBC booth. A special pension for arthritic knees. It is strangely like Scottish devolution.

This particular bit of road towards the manifesto, the first mile for Blair to travel, comes familiarly grid-locked:

the road to the Centre Court on Tube strike day. Voters under the age of 36 won't have trod it before. They may, in anticipation, find it as inspiring as the quest for some Brit to win the men's singles. Love-forty. Prepare for a heart-breaker of a tie-breaker. New Labour's first new idea is seven years older than the Battle of the Somme. It was official Liberal Party policy in 1989. But replays: the great games of history don't start until 1995 and the real birth (from a postage mass of Scottish Patriots, the Scottish Covenant Association and other tasselled fringes) of a serious Scottish Party capable of winning by-elections and scaring the big boys witless.

If you were interested in politics qua politics, if you relished the sport of things, you loved devolution. You briefly agreed (amazingly) with the Home Secretary: "There is more here than desire for referendums in Wales and Scotland. Politicians fighting a losing battle often suggest a measure like this. Could it be that, anxious to hold on to their Scottish seats, they are raising home rule as their rallying point? But what about England? Should England not be consulted? Should there not be a referendum for England?" But that Home Secretary was Labour's Merlyn Rees in 1989, shutting down a Liberal move; whilst Chancellor Roy Jenkins paped the media with Treasury figures showing the 688 a year every English taxpayer donated to ungrateful Scots.

We may gloss over that as lightly as Mr Heath's subsequent Conservative commission (1985 to 1989) — of a report by Sir Alec Douglas-Home which, in 1970, recommended a Scottish assembly. Ted's electoral ace. But the golden era of topspin and backspin, of course, was the late seventies.

Prime Minister Callaghan, whose wider enthusiasm for devolution didn't seem to extend much beyond a non-executive directorship of the Bank of Wales, got the bug because there were 11 Scots Nat MPs and they were *survival*. Shambles on Sauchiehall Street. The Tories fell every which way. Malcolm Rifkind was an ardent Yes campaigner. Alick Buchanan-Smith, resigned as shadow Scottish Secretary to fight for devolution. Sir Alec wanted proportional representation or nothing. Teddy

again. The kind of referendum the Liberals wanted in 1969 and Labour blew away is now what Labour wants. The returning Tam will vote for a referendum before and a referendum after. The West Lothian question remains as unanswered as ever. John Smith said in 1979 that it would be "dishonest" not to slash the number of Scottish Labour MPs at Westminster. Nobody.

Taylor, as ever, did his own sweet, contrary turn on the way to Southend.

And Labour? Some joined the Yes For Scotland wagon. Some said yes via the Scottish TUC. Brian Wilson headed the Labour Says No crusade. Tam Dalyell did his own splendidly relentless thing. To remind: 33 per cent voted Yes, 51 per cent voted No and 38 per cent stayed at home—thus lowering the Islington South imposed boom that 40 per cent of those eligible should sign up for an assembly.

It was like watching Ivanisevic play Volkov. By the third set you didn't care who won, so long as it ended quickly.

It was like watching Ivanisevic play Volkov. By the third set you didn't care who won, so long as it ended quickly.



# The hammer and sickle

Yeltsin won the election but will he win in a power struggle? Archie Brown on why the president's ill-health and the rise of Lebed suggest that more stormy times are ahead in Russian politics

IN SOME ways it is like old times for the West's Russia-watchers. Once again we are speculating about the health of a top leader and the prospect of power struggles in the Kremlin. In other respects we are a world away from the last years of Leonid Brezhnev and of his infirm successors, Yury Andropov and Konstantin Chernenko. The idea of one of them participating in a relatively free election beggars the imagination.

Of course, the Russian presidential election was not wholly free and fair. Boris Yeltsin owed much of his success to the overwhelming bias in his favour of the Russian mass media. If his latest bout of ill-health had been given a fraction of the publicity on Russian television and in the press it has received in the West, there would have been a significantly higher abstention rate among potential Yeltsin voters.

Gennady Zyuganov's Communist Party of the Russian Federation is, indeed, relatively unreconstructed, even though millions of decent but impoverished people—the losers in post-Soviet Russia—were among the 40 per cent of the population who voted Communist on Wednesday. Zyuganov has projected different images before different audiences but his recently reiterated praise for Joseph Stalin and his alliance with hard-line Russian nationalists, dating back to the Gorbachev era, should leave no one under the illusion that he is a born-again social democrat.

A communist system, complete with five-year-plan and another attempt to outlaw the market, could not, in fact, have been restored. But the settling of scores that would have ensued had Zyuganov won and the intolerance and extreme chauvinism of many of the leading figures in his communist/nationalist alliance are sufficient reason for concluding that those who voted for Yeltsin in the second round, albeit with misgivings and only as a lesser evil, were right to do so.

That is not to say that electors who hoped to avoid another upheaval by returning to office the presidential incumbent will have their desires met. Yeltsin's uncertain health and the rise of Alexander Lebed suggest that stormy times are ahead in Russian politics. The American press has begun to put down Yeltsin's health problems to cir-

rhosis of the liver. Until now no one in the West seems to have questioned the information of the Russian authorities last year that Yeltsin had had two relatively mild heart attacks. When a very sick-looking president is said to have a cold or a sore throat, no one is fooled. But when a heart attack is announced all scepticism apparently ends.

Yeltsin's illness, the more ambitious politicians would be thinking about the situation, but as things stand the tensions have become acute.

It was in advance of bringing Lebed into a senior position in his presidential team that Yeltsin made up his mind to dispense with his long-standing chief bodyguard and exceptionally close adviser, Alexander Korzhakov; Minister of Defence Pavel Grachev; the director of the Federal Security Service, Mikhail Barsukov; and First Deputy Premier and chief spokesman for the military-industrial complex, Oleg Soskovets. Soskovets had been, among other things, a potential rival to the present Prime Minister, Chernomyrdin. And the rivalry was more than personal for Chernomyrdin is the patron of the Russian gas and oil industry, whereas Soskovets represents the interests of the other industrial giant, military production. (The only time when Soskovets impinged on the public consciousness of most people in the West was when he, somewhat belatedly, came down the steps of the Russian aircraft at Dublin to meet the

round on the grounds that they are being used for the production of "order" it will be interesting to see whether Yeltsin is really prepared to take the considerable risk of appointing people linked to Lebed to these key positions in the power structure.

The names of the successors will provide the first clues as to whether a second-term Yeltsin has become excessively dependent on a novice politician but one with a large following. Of special significance is the post of Minister of Defence, for several times lately Lebed has gone on public record saying that the job should go to General Igor Rodionov, of whom he is a great admirer. But it was Rodionov who was responsible for the brutal dispersal of young demonstrators in the Georgian capital of Tbilisi in April 1989 which led to the deaths of 19 of them. His appointment would be confirmation not only of Lebed's growing influence but also of an authoritarian tendency within a political system that, elections notwithstanding, remains a curious hybrid of authoritarianism and democracy.

Yeltsin's health remains weak or declines further, the main struggle may be between Lebed and some of the powerful interests and individuals (the latter including Chernomyrdin and the Moscow mayor, Yury Luzhkov) who compete for dominance in Russian political life. If, however, Yeltsin recovers yet again, it would be surprising if he did not clash sooner rather than later with Lebed himself.

Even though Yeltsin in effect has named Lebed as his heir apparent, the working relationship already shows signs of being an uneasy one with Lebed having laid claim to a vice-presidency which no longer exists in the constitution. Neither Yeltsin nor Lebed can be counted among nature's subordinates. Spacious though the Kremlin is, it may not be big enough for both of them.

Archie Brown, Professor of Politics at Oxford University and Sub-Warden of St Antony's College, is the author of The Gorbachev Factor

# Wired for sound new principles



Bel Littlejohn

ARE you wired yet? You're not? Hey—get a life, baby! I've been on the Internet for 18 months (belnewlab@nuffsd.zzz.uk) and I've never looked back. It was my best mate Anita Roddick who told me to get wired. The Body Shop (smelz:pat/ro/nise.eeyurghuk) has been wired for five years now, so that subscribers can get a generous sample of Anita's lovely new Cocos and Semolina Elbow-Rub shooting at them down the line—and all for the cost of a local phone call. And let me tell you that Anita's dream is to link every single Amazonian rainforest dweller to the Net, so that they can let her know the minute they run out of Mango and Oatmeal Lobe-Salve and she can barter with them (at a knock-down rate) for extra supplies of Guacamole and Red Squirrel Foot Polish.

Let's face it, we're in the middle of an information revolution at least as big as Slourie and the Banshees—and I'm talking about when they were really big—and yet our so-called leaders appear not to know the first thing about it.

For instance, most of my colleagues in New Labour—particularly some of the older ones, I regret to say—continue to live in the dark ages. The other day at Walworth Road, I was introduced to Barbara Castle, on a whistle-stop visit. Everyone was telling her how distinguished she was—but then it turned out she didn't have the foggiest idea what a compatible interactive telecommunications interface spreadsheet database was!

"We're talking global visions of an interrelationships database here, Barbara," I told her. But she looked blank. "I trust the present leader of the party isn't going to abandon good old-fashioned socialist principles—that's all I care about," she hissed. "You've lost me there, Barbara," I replied. "Say it again, a bit slower this time, if you would."

As she repeated her sentence, I tapped in good-soci:princs.uk into my palmtop. Back came the message: "Refer petman.uk:machi/prev, and I found myself redirected to my good friend Peter Mandelson's online database.

"Are we abandoning good-soci:princs.uk?" I tapped in. Sadly, the screen went blank and switched itself off. But, as I explained to Barbara, you can't expect a com-

prehensive international database to carry every single forgotten detail from hundreds of years ago.

The thing I love about the Net is the way it offers you access to a world of information at the flick of a switch. For instance, if I want to know the bass player of Fleetwood Mac, circa 1969, or the Welsh village with the longest name, or how fast a gazelle can run, or the average annual rainfall in Lima, Peru, or how to cook a vegetarian lasagne, then I can look it up on the Internet. This is incredibly handy for those who can spare the time, though obviously a book would be a lot quicker.

I can confidently predict that the Internet will change the very nature of Western democracy. After all, who wants to get out and vote in a dusty booth when they can be just as happy staying at home playing on a great little machine? And frankly I've had some of the most fascinating conversations of my life via e-mail. By linking my single Amazonian rainforest-dweller to the Net, so that they can let her know the minute they run out of Mango and Oatmeal Lobe-Salve and she can barter with them (at a knock-down rate) for extra supplies of Guacamole and Red Squirrel Foot Polish.

"hi.bel.here.what's.your.name?" "my.name.www.is.bel.too" "so.my.name.that's.funny" "maybe.it's.becoz.we.are.the.same.person" "nuff.said.cheers/belUK:over.and.out"

GREAT! And for God's sake don't tell me you could have conducted a conversation like that 10, 15, 20 years ago. It's up to each of us to play our part in taking the information revolution to every home in the country. For this reason, I am masterminding the New Labour link-up with Paddy Ashdown's Lib Dems to urge the present discredited Tory government to get Britain switched on to the worldwide Internet. Paddy's been in the forefront of information technology for a decade. In my humble opinion we in New Labour could learn a thing or two from the guy.

For instance, Paddy tells me he regularly updates himself on the latest headcount of Lib Dem MPs by feeding all the available information into his palmtop headcount package and getting an up-to-the-minute read-out. "It's always around the 20-mark," he enthuses. He also has valuable information—his wife's Christian name and hobbies, his very latest opinions on the Bosnian situation—available on a package at the press of a button, if ever he needs it. And as for those of us in New Labour, our principal pledge in the finished Manifesto—"Guaranteed school places for all nine-year-olds, resources permitting"—is at the cutting edge of information technology.

NewStatesman advertisement featuring a quote: "If you don't like the leader, get rid of him." and listing authors like John Keane and E.J. Dionne.

NewStatesman advertisement with the text: "The new NewStatesman new look, new writers, new thinking. On sale today at WH Smith, John Menzies and all good newsagents."

10 OBITUARIES

Clay Jones

Guru in the nation's gardens

SEEDSMEN don't actually sell seeds, observed Clay Jones, who has died aged 72. "What they do sell is optimism." Reassurance and optimism were the trademarks of the most recognizable voice of gardening on BBC Radio 4's Gardener's Question Time.

and most called David, he was soon permanently dubbed Clay. As a young man he was offered a job with the D'Oyley Carte opera by his mother, who saw the theatre as an iniquitous, refused it. He could, very occasionally be persuaded to sing and when he did, the world stopped to listen.

'Gardeners don't want slick television presenters, just be yourself. And never lie to them'

I last saw Clay at the Chelsea Flower Show in May surrounded by his normal entourage of admiring ladies as he dispensed advice and encouragement with genuine charm just as he did to the readers of his column in the Lady.

Stefan Bennack writes: I once met a man who said to me, "I believe you know Clay Jones. Did you know that he's one of the richest men in Wales?" I relayed the story to Clay a



Help line... Clay Jones offers some growing tips

blossomed and flourished under Clay's firm - but never heavy - hand. His voice and his manner were reassuring and he had that rare facility of putting the most nervous questioners at their ease and of handling the most naive and curious of questions without letting the person asking it feel in any way awkward.

decision to put it out to independent production. His heart attack in the summer of 1993 and subsequent decision to retire, as he put it with dignity, came before the change actually occurred.

Pierre Chany

Chasing the Yellow Jerseys

PIERRE CHANY, who has died aged 73, covered every major continental cycling race since 1947 and wrote about nothing else. His outstanding books on the Tour de France and the Classics have become definitive reference works. Had it not been for his fatal bout of pleurisy Chany would now be in the press caravan following his 50th consecutive Tour de France.

Haute Loire region of France, Chany began his working life as a locksmith while pursuing a good amateur racing career. After active service in the Resistance, he followed the first Tour de France in 1947 as a journalist, a "Tour of Enthusiasm" as he described those early days on the back of a motorbike exposed to the same hazards as the riders - the gruelling heat of the plains, alpine thunderstorms and treacherous untarred mountain passes.



Pierre Chany... ingenious

The task of telegraphing his "papier" back to Paris was always a test of ingenuity. "With chocolate or a bottle of spirit, we would persuade the local postmaster to reserve the line for our

relating what he saw in the present to the great mythical heroes of the past was never excessive or sentimental. One of his most memorable pieces was a portrait of L'abbé Joseph Massie, the priest of Bastide d'Armagnac, who worshipped cycling and founded the parish "Notre Dame des Cyclistes".

the recent tendency to export major races to countries with no culture of cycle racing: "China or Colombia I can understand... but to stage the World Championships in Japan is like holding a bull-fight in Scotland".

Letter

Bernard McDonnell writes: I was on the first full-time Fresh Horizons course at the City Literary Institute in 1973 and Enid Hutchinson's work (obituary, June 6) was as effective for men as it was for women. I left school aged 15 in 1960 without any qualifications, or hope, having been let down, like thousands of other working-class children, by the pre-comprehensive secondary modern school system.

Ghita Ionescu

Impresario of academia

GHITA IONESCU, who has died aged 83, was one of a remarkable group of scholars of east European origin who coalesced at the London School of Economics in the 1960s. He rapidly made his mark with such books as Communism in Romania (1965) and The Politics of the East European Communist States (1968).

rest, he joined the Romanian diplomatic service, resigning on the day of King Michael's abdication in 1947. Soon after he came to England, where he married Valence Ramsay de Bois MacLaren. By the mid-1950s he was general secretary of the New York-based Romanian National Committee, after which he was director of Radio Free Europe for five years.



Ionescu... special talent

old university, an occasion which deeply moved him. At Manchester in the 1970s he wrote and edited books which identified trends that were to emerge as some of the most important in western politics. There was The New Politics of European Integration (1974), Between Sovereignty and Integration (1974), and Central Politics (1975), and

The European Alternatives (1979). The latter was a massive organisational feat which brought together academic critics of European Commission policies with responses from the relevant officials. This book was a monument to Ionescu's gifts as an academic impresario.

and Politics And The Pursuit Of Happiness (1984) which owed much to the Spanish philosopher Unamuno. His intuitive intelligence led him to indulge a passion for bridge with friends at the Athenaeum Club, where he was a most generous host. He also had a passion for racing.

Jackdaw



New matter: H2O is hot water and CO2 is cold water. To collect fumes of sulphur, hold a deacon over a flame in a test tube. Three kinds of blood vessels are arteries, veins and capillaries.

Planet: a body of earth surrounded by sky. Rhabarbar: a kind of celery gone bloodshot. Vacuum: a large empty space where the Pope lives. The tides are a fight between the earth and the moon. All water tends towards the moon, because there is no water on the moon and nature abhors a vacuum. I forget where the sun joins in the fight.

CRJ: What gets the dogs to fight? Squirt: Sometimes the owner puts cocaine on their nose. That's like a man drinking beer - it gets the dog on the edge. Then they go up in the field or out in the middle of the street. They don't care who sees.

Squirt: Some people fight dogs for cash 'cause it's their only income, or some fight out of love or pride. But mainly they like to gamble on the dog's life, not for my money. They want to see which dog is best.

Hang on: SO WHAT'S good about a hangover? Everything (except the headache, maybe) which you think you hate about it. The hangover person is abnormally aware of sights, sounds, (everything seems TOO LOUD) tastes, odours, and textures which normally would go unremarked. That's a good thing, not a bad thing. The hangover eye, for instance, because it is neither obstructed by the blinders of our everyday biases, nor deceived by intoxicatingly attractive objects which take on an incredible, luminous significance. Any one who has ever experienced

"For breakfast aspirins/ a glass of milky water. I am always just learning how to live..." (Depression, St Patrick's Day, 1976). I find something heartening in Corbett's notion that when we are neither sober nor drunk we have an opportunity to start afresh. (see Glenn, "The Hermeticities of a Hangover: William Corbett's poetry")...

nothing the next morning but physical pain? Because we've been educated to feel that way. Take a look at the hundreds of books and articles out there on the subject of intoxication that discuss at length the difference between drunk and being sober, yet never explore that inviolable duration of time during which one painfully returns from ecstasy to mundanity...

Test drive: YOU the driver: 1. Drinking effects: Three likely effects of this are: Mark three answers. 2. You are approaching a right hand bend. You should normally keep well to the: Right to avoid loose gravel at the edge of the road. Left to reduce the sharpness of the bend. Right to enable faster cornering. Left for a better view around the bend.

Barry Linehan Sweet taste of success Barry Linehan's television voice-over advertising Mr Epping's Exceedingly Good Cakes gave him exposure for 10 years and multiplied sales of those delicacies in one of the most successful TV ad campaigns ever. Yet this accomplished character actor who masked any serious sides to his personality with gregariousness and jokes died of cancer alone in his small flat at the age of 70. Large, rugged and with piercing eyes, he was a formidable player of villains who spent many years being amiably sociable in Gerry's Club, kept by Gerry Campion in London. In private he often sent up the sort of facade with which he was publicly associated. He first met his former agent Kenneth Earle when Earle, half of a comedy act with Malcolm Vaughan, was touring Australia. Wherever they appeared local artists protested at this British invasion. At the Checkers Club in Sydney, one Australian member of the line-up made himself particularly difficult and uncooperative - the Irish-born Linehan. Finally, charmed despite himself by Earle and Vaughan's act, he realised he was over-doing the anti-Limey stance and expansively asked them to a reconciliatory lunch. Earle accepted - and suffered the worst food poisoning of his life. Years later, when Earle had become his agent, Linehan would ring him at his office and disconcert secretaries who inquired who was calling by saying, "The Sydney Poisoner here!" Linehan, who entered show business in Britain in 1961, did much television work, including The Canterbury Tales, Ivanhoe, Witch's Daughter, Spider's Web, and plays for the Archaic Theatre slot. In the cinema, he also played the part of Alan. Directed by Michael Winner in Bullseye, he played an American toughie with Michael Caine and Roger Moore in other roles. To Winner, he was "one of those small-part actors who are the backbone of British films even if no one knows they are there in Bullseye was a real professional." He appeared irregularly on the stage, his most notable appearances being in a production of Kiss Me Kate by the Royal Shakespeare Company. Linehan had suffered from prostate cancer for four years, at first kept from friends. He withdrew from public view and on June 8 collapsed on the stairs in his Malda Vale flat where he was found by a neighbour only some time later. The news did not reach friends until two weeks after that, one of the saddest and cruellest twists of fate in a business which contains many.

German EDUVAL S... Tony...

Costain... Tony...

Emily Sheffield

July 1996

# Air France president's plan flies in face of pilots' strike

French flag carrier braced for battle over cost-cutting drive. Mark Milner reports

**A**ir France president Christian Blanc yesterday pushed through a cost-cutting restructuring programme at the state-owned airline, despite a strike grounded 70 per cent of flights at its Air France Europe subsidiary.

Mr Blanc announced that Air France Europe, formerly Air Inter, would be merged with Air France — a proposal which goes beyond his initial plan, rejected by the AFE pilots last week, to combine the subsidiary's operations with the parent airline's European business.

The restructuring will not, however, mean any addition to the 960 job losses over the next two years which have already been announced.

Mr Blanc is determined to cut costs at Air France Europe, where pilots are reported to be the highest paid in Europe, with salaries about 18 per cent above those of Air France pilots.

Under the merger proposal, Air France Europe salaries would be brought into line with those paid to Air France employees.

Mr Blanc told staff yesterday that the global airline in-

dustry was undergoing a revolution and important decisions had to be taken.

If it was to survive, Air France Europe faced two choices — to be merged with Air France or to turn itself into a low-cost airline.

The latter choice would mean cutting costs by 30-40 per cent by buying or leasing low-cost aircraft, through rudimentary reservation and distribution systems, low pay for employees and withdrawal from many of the activities of a traditional airline.

"Why is it impossible for a traditional company like ours? For a very simple reason. The social cost of such an adjustment would be insupportable."

Merging Air France and Air France Europe would have the benefits of bringing together domestic, European and international operations. Closer co-operation in those three areas would be a decisive factor in allowing the French flag carrier to compete with "high-performance US or European carriers such as British Airways, KLM and Lufthansa".

With the European aviation market scheduled to open up



Raising stakes... Christian Blanc enters the meeting with Air France unions at which he announced his revised strategy. PHOTOGRAPH: PHILIPPE WOJAZER

in 1997, "if we don't react, we're going to lock ourselves into a downward spiral leading to bankruptcy". Mr Blanc told a staff council meeting, "That's the situation we face."

Mr Blanc said a merger would remove the "crippling uncertainty brought on by ve-

being powers of Air France Europe's labour unions and guarantee that Air France as a whole be turned around by the spring of next year."

Last month, Air France reported its first operating profit in seven years — the results of a three-year restructuring programme and

the provision of state aid — but Air France Europe's performance has deteriorated and it is losing money at the operating level.

Air France reported an operating profit of Fr413 million (€52 million) in 1995/96, while Air France Europe reported an operating loss of

Fr549 million. Company officials say Air France Europe loses almost Fr100 million a month.

The deal makes Adidas — which was owned by Mr Tapie until 1993 — the most powerful company in French football. It already has a contract until 2002 with the French Football Federation and equips 31 teams in the French league.

GM, as the club is known, is now expected to step up its search for new players, including a goalkeeper, a sweeper, a defender and a forward.

# Tunnel takes on 'early bird' airlines

Keith Harper Transport Editor

**E**UROSTAR has started a service to get business people to meetings in Paris before 10 am, in competition with airlines' early bird flights.

The Channel tunnel service has introduced a 4.53 am train from London Waterloo, with a departure time of 6.15 am from Ashford. A train from London to Paris direct is to be introduced in the autumn.

Eurostar's commercial director, Ian Brooks, said yesterday: "We can guarantee to get passengers to the centre of Paris for early meetings."

British Airways' first flight to Paris is at 6.40 am, arriving at Orly at 9 am local time, but reaching central Paris can take an hour or more.

Eurostar yesterday confirmed details of a 248 day return fare from Ashford to Paris, Brussels, Lille or Calais, available from July 15 to September 1.

Passenger numbers have increased since April, when the business was transferred to London and Continental Railways from the public sector, from 100,000 to 126,000 a week, of whom 22,000 are business travellers.

Mr Brooks said Eurostar carried 3.4 million passengers last year and hoped to take six million this year. It needs to carry 2½ million to 3 million passengers a year before it can break even, a target it hopes to achieve within two years.

# Germany's Adidas secures toehold in French football

ALEX DUVAL SMITH on fluctuating fortunes at Olympique de Marseille

**O**LYMPIQUE de Marseille yesterday looked set to emerge from three years of penury and disgrace after Adidas, the German sports-wear company, won its bid to run the French football club for the next five years.

Adidas beat off competition from IMG McCormack, the US sports management company, and Tat, the French textiles group, to take over commercial management of

the club. Placed in receivership after accumulating debts of more than Fr250 million (€31.2 million) under its previous owner, the politician-tycoon Bernard Tapie, the club has been controlled by Marseilles city council for the past year.

It was the city's mayor, Jean-Claude Gaudin, who yesterday announced that the Adidas bid had been successful. It is known to be dependent on a one-off payment of at least Fr30 million to the council, annual investments in the club of at least Fr30 million and the ability to attract Fr150 million in outside capital every year.

The Adidas bid for Eric Cantona's old club — which will return to the French premier division in August after a year's relegation caused by a match-rigging scandal — is thought to be considerably higher than the minimum stipulated by the council.

IMG McCormack, in conjunction with the Nike sports-wear firm, offered Fr100 mil-

lion this year and annual investments of Fr40 million. Tat had pledged, among other things, to open a department store in Marseilles.

Even though former managers of Olympique de Marseille are still in court fighting match-rigging allegations from the Tapie era, the club's glorious track record makes it a plum acquisition.

The club's five French league titles and its victory in the 1993 European Champions Cup are far better remembered than the disgrace brought upon it by allegations linked to Mr Tapie. It is alleged that

# News in brief

## 14 oil firms seek Falklands licences

**F**OURTEEN international oil companies, comprising six groups from ten countries, have applied for licences to explore for oil off the Falkland Islands. It was announced yesterday.

Bidding for licences was launched by the Falkland Islands government last October and closed on Tuesday. Out of 19 tranches on offer, covering a total of more than 44,000 square kilometres, bids have been received for 10 — described as the equivalent of 68 North Sea blocks.

John Martin, oil licensing administrator, said the response had been very positive. Licences should be awarded well before the end of the year to allow interested firms to begin exploration before the next southern summer. Winning bids will have to be given the all-clear by Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind. — Simon Beavis

# Costain out of debt hole

Outlook/ Troubled group's Malaysian deal best it could get, says Tony May

**C**OSTAIN has looked into the abyss but is heading back from the brink to the arms of a darling Malaysian partner.

To the chagrin of UK rivals, who had written the group off, Costain looks set to lose its troubled image thanks to Intra, a construction group capitalised at £467.6 million, taking a 40 per cent stake as part of a £78.5 million rescue.

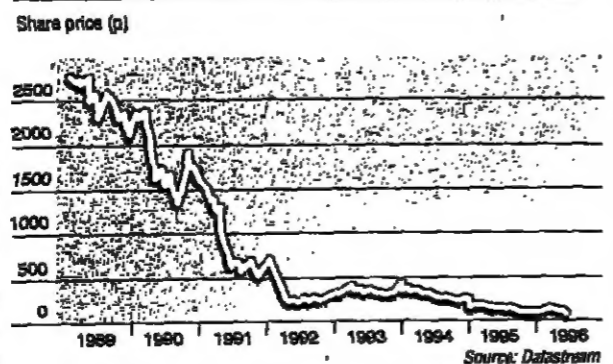
Intra has underlined its ardour by taking up four out of the group's 10 boardroom seats even though it does not yet know how big a stake it will end up with. The only carrot on offer to old shareholders in a proposed capital reconstruction is the prospect of new business in the booming South Asia market — hailed by Allan Lovell, the chief executive, as "the engine for growth".

Margins are wide enough in that market for a decent profit to be made. Unlike the UK, where the group's £74 million Newbury bypass contract is not expected to make a profit, and conditions remain tough.

Even the UK is better than the Middle East where the group admits that contracts taken out in 1995 and earlier do not even cover overheads.

Under the reconstruction scheme launched yesterday, a three-for-one open offer of 155.35 million new 50p ordinary shares will raise £77.6 million. The group's banks are ready to swap debt for equity and could end up with 35 per cent of the group's

## The way down



shares.

The group's long-suffering shareholders will thus be squeezed into a 25 per cent minority in a company which — assuming pending asset sales go through and raise the expected £60 million — will be capitalised at £104 million. Net debt will be about £77 million and it might have £30 million of cash.

The group's circular sees little hope of a dividend. It says that in 1995 the group turned over £796.8 million of business but ended up with pre-tax and pre-interest losses of £37.8 million — excluding exceptional losses of £56.4 million. It has aggregate write-downs of £143.4 million and a deficit in its profit and loss account of £89.8 million.

The board hopes to put proposals for eliminating the deficit to what promises to be a lively annual general meeting. Shareholders, who have seen the group's market value slump from more than £1 billion in 1990 to £20.2 million when the shares were suspended last week.

In one of the worst performing sectors of the stock mar-

# Training pact unites foes

Unions and TECs seek to bridge skills gap, writes CELIA WESTON

**T**RAINING and Enterprise Councils yesterday announced an accord with the TUC aimed at boosting workplace training through negotiation with employers.

The Bargaining for Skills initiative, announced at the TECs' annual conference in Birmingham, signals the end of open hostility between the two organisations, which have clashed over the lack of accountability of TECs and the exclusion of trade union representatives when the employer-led TECs were established six years ago.

A good practice guide, produced jointly by the TEC national council and the TUC, will be published in the autumn.

Bargaining for Skills projects, now involving 20 TECs with a target of 40 by next year, are aimed at providing union representatives with the skills to negotiate on training issues and to raise their awareness of National Vocational Qualifications, training needs analyses for businesses, and the Investors in People standard.

The outbreak of unity also characterised Conservative and Labour announcements on the future of TECs. Speaking at the

conference, Richard Page, small firms minister, reaffirmed the Government's confidence and support for the 81 TECs and for the network of Business Link one-stop shops providing business support services.

Labour yesterday confirmed in its pre-election document continued support for TECs. "The existing structure — TECs, NVQs, Investors in People — can remain and be improved."

Earlier, Chris Humphries, national director of policy and strategy for the TECs, criticised the cost of the bureaucratic burdens placed on councils by the Government.

First estimates suggest the cost of bureaucracy could be as high as 30 per cent of training costs to meet the contract requirements placed on us by government," he said.

© Gillian Shephard, Education and Employment Secretary, announced at the conference a £2 million redesign of the Youth Training Scheme. National Traineeships will provide a work-based route to qualifications.

# Fewer go out of business

**T**HE number of companies going bust in the first half of 1996 hit a six-year low according to a report published yesterday. Although accountants Deloitte & Touche recorded 128 receiverships and administration orders in June, compared with 115 in May, the six-month total fell for the sixth year in a row. The drop in failures was "relatively consistent across regions and industry sectors", according to Ralph Preece, the partner in charge of corporate recovery. Only Yorkshire and Humberside saw a significant increase in failing firms, up by 23 per cent. — Sarah Kyle

# Strike threat to Vickers

**V**ICKERS Defence Systems is facing potential disruption to government defence contracts after members of four staff unions voted four to one in favour of a ballot for industrial action. The company is already said to be facing delays to a £750 million order for 986 Challenger 3 tanks because of problems over a computer-aided turret component. Employee protests followed the withdrawal of profit-related pay and the imposition of a 3 per cent pay rise, according to union sources. Union spokesman Guy Hudd said there had been a gradual breakdown of industrial relations with no consultations over changes in conditions of employment. The company, which employs 700 of its 1,500 staff at plants in Leeds and Newcastle, declined to comment. — Marilyn Hulsall

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 1,825	France 7,750	Italy 2,335	Singapore 2.15
Austria 18.19	Germany 2,305	Malta 0.945	South Africa 8.98
Belgium 47.20	Greece 364.50	Netherlands 2,850	Spain 163.40
Canada 2.07	Hong Kong 11.77	New Zealand 2,150	Sweden 10.50
Cyprus 0.705	India 54.40	Norway 9.85	Switzerland 1.59
Denmark 8.91	Ireland 0.8450	Portugal 238.00	Turkey 123.353
Finland 7.18	Israel 4.98	Saudi Arabia 5.52	USA 1,5250

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## COPPER CRISIS

### Dealers' private firms fail to file accounts on time

#### Registrar chases overdue records

Paul Murphy

**T**WO private companies, into which the metals dealers Charles Vincent and Ashley Levett poured the huge profits made from trading copper with clients such as Yasuo Hamanaka, the Sumitomo "rogue trader", failed to comply with company law, by not filing their accounts on time.

It also appears that Winchester Commodities, the metals brokerage run by Mr Vincent and Mr Levett, made heavy losses once it stopped doing business last summer with Mr Hamanaka, who lost Sumitomo Corporation upwards of \$1.2 billion from his copper dealings.

Accounts for CAMV, Mr Vincent's private company, and AML, the company controlled by Mr Levett, his multi-millionaire partner, should have been lodged with the Registrar of Companies by the end of May. 10 months after the end of their financial year on July 31, 1995.

Confirming the legal breach, a spokesman for the registrar said: "We are in correspondence with the two companies over this. A spokesman for Mr Vincent and Mr Levett, both now living in Monte Carlo, said:

"They are aware they are behind schedule but the accounts will be filed."

But even the old accounts show that Messrs Vincent and Levett were able to earn the bulk of their fortunes in just two years of trading through their jointly owned vehicle, Winchester.

In the two years ended April 1995, Winchester paid Mr Vincent's CAMV £24.7 million, while Mr Levett's AML picked up just over £25 million.

Winchester has been under scrutiny by the Securities and Futures Authority, the City watchdog, since September 1994, but the SFA stated in early May this year that it had decided not to initiate disciplinary action against the firm.

Neither Mr Vincent nor Mr Levett who, with their wives, own CAMV and AML, have personally broken company law through failing to file timely accounts. The breach — punishable by fines of up to £5,000 — is the responsibility of the directors, not the shareholders of CAMV and AML.

Mr Vincent resigned as a director of CAMV in March this year, while Mr Levett quit in June last year.

Winchester Commodities has some months to go before it must file its accounts.

Sources indicate that Winchester suffered a severe loss

at the end of 1995 — perhaps amounting to £20 million when it was caught on the wrong side of a sudden jump in the copper price.

However, it is not known how profitable it has been overall for the year ending April 1995.

By last autumn, Mr Hamanaka had transferred the bulk of his dealings in copper to an American metals firm, Global Minerals & Metals, which is the subject of a grand jury investigation in New York.

Mr Hamanaka's dealings are widely believed to have caused the spike in price of copper during November and December last year.

In the two years to April 1995, Winchester's accounts show total reported income of almost £130 million. Most of this — just under £110 million — flowed through what the accounts term "trading" rather than through "brokerage", which brought in £10 million. The April 1995 balance sheet showed cash balances of \$43 million.

CAMV's accounts display signs of careful financial planning and legal measures taken some time before Mr Vincent went into tax exile. Mr Vincent is believed to have used Burgess Salmon, a Bristol-based firm of solicitors noted for its expertise in trust arrangements for the wealthy.

Meanwhile, reports in Japan suggested that Mr Hamanaka has been staying at a hotel in the country's second-biggest city, Osaka, since before the scandal broke earlier this month. Sumitomo has said it was unaware of the rogue trader's whereabouts.

### Utilities accuse Labour of acting to hurt customers

Chris Barrie  
Business Correspondent

**W**ATER and electricity companies said yesterday that Labour's plans for a windfall tax on excess profits would jeopardise customer rebates and investment in infrastructure.

As shadow chancellor Gordon Brown confirmed plans for a levy to fund training programmes for the unemployed, the water and power company United Utilities indicated that it might reconsider paying customers an annual rebate of £6.50.

A spokesman said: "We think that a tax would be damaging to shareholder and customer interests."

London Electricity warned that a tax could compromise its ability to fund investment in "safe and reliable supplies" in the capital. East Midlands Electricity accused Labour

of planning an "opportunistic and short-term tax" that would damage the "fair balance" struck to date between the interests of customers, shareholders and investment priorities.

Meanwhile, British Gas denied suggestions that it had mounted a lobbying campaign to persuade Mr Brown to change his mind.

Other utility companies called on Labour to end uncertainty by publishing details of the tax.

Confirmation of the party's tax plans came as the shadow energy minister, John Battle, promised to avoid "vendetta politics", inviting utilities to help formulate policy on regulation.

Promising regulation based on "stability, firmness, transparency and accountability", Mr Battle said competition and acceptance of change now lay at the heart of the party's policy-making.

Proposals for regulation

will be published in September. Mr Battle indicated yesterday that he would not use rate-of-return methods of profit-capping, preferring to impose penalties for missing supply targets, coupled with a mechanism to force underinvesting companies to cut prices.

Mr Battle assured water and power firms that there would be no renationalisation, or any attempt to use regulation as a back door to public ownership.

Instead, he said, the party's primary task was to return legitimacy and political stability to the industry for the benefit of "all parties".

Mr Battle, speaking to industry delegates at a conference organised by the Institute of Economic Affairs, said customers "had been driving the agenda" of industry restructuring for the last six months, but his had yet to be reflected in public opinion.

### Port to create 500 jobs

#### Martyn Halsall on an ambitious £20m expansion plan for Merseyside docks

**A** £20 million expansion plan for the Port of Liverpool is forecast to create more than 500 jobs.

The scheme will bring another 70 acres into the Mersey Freeport area at Bootle, north Liverpool. It follows a decision in favour of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company by Transport Secretary Sir George Young after a public inquiry in February.

Funding will come from the public and private sectors. Detailed road plans will be discussed this week and work could start on new facilities early next year. The developer will allow the transfer of warehouse operations from quayside sites needed for shipping and cargo-handling, said Ken Wharton, Mersey Docks' marketing director.

Expansion for an 80,000 sq metre warehouse and industrial complex will include the closure of a mile-long stretch

of Liverpool's historic dock road but the plan will rescue land which has lain derelict for up to 80 years.

"It's the biggest expansion of [the 2,000-acre] dock estate for a very long time," said a MDHC spokesman. "There is now a very definite recognition in the industry of the value of being close to the port and the Freeport."

However, hundreds of jobs are said to be in jeopardy from the loss of Merseyside's container service, Atlantic Container Line's decision to transfer its service to the South-east was blamed by the MDHC on an international campaign waged by 500 dockers, sacked nine months ago.

Yesterday it emerged that the closure of two small stevedoring companies, with the loss of 30 jobs, will bring to 100 the redundancies blamed on ACL's departure a fortnight ago. The companies are half-owned by the MDHC.

Bernard Cliff, the port's operations director, has warned that ACL's departure could cost up to 1,000 jobs as the effects spread into associated companies. Leaders of the 329 former MDHC dockers, who rejected a jobs-and-cash

redundancy offer two weeks before it was shredded by the MDHC following ACL's departure, yesterday claimed "gobbledygook" job projections had inflated the scheme's new importance.

Many new jobs were likely to be part-time and low paid, forecast Mike Carden, a member of the dock shop stewards' committee. He claimed the new development would expose the community further to port-related problems, such as environmental damage resulting from coal-dust.

Sacked dock workers would continue their campaign for reinstatement, and against the "unjust and disgraceful way" the employers had reacted, said Mr Carden, a married man with two children and a weekly income of £44 unemployment benefit.

The MDHC men were sacked last September after they refused to cross a picket line set up by sacked workers in a stevedoring company.

The MDHC said in June it was no longer able to fund its £8 million peace proposal after the departure of ACL. It earlier blamed the dispute for slicing £4 million off its £31.7 million profits in 1995.



Flying the flag... Sir Colin Marshall, chairman of British Airways, marked US Independence Day — and his company's ties with America — while he was at London Business School to receive an honorary fellowship. BA will again underline the special relationship next week when it explains to the Commons transport select committee why its alliance with American Airlines should be approved. PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN ARGLES

### Former chief of Hornby in line for £720,000

Pauline Springett

**H**ORNBY, manufacturer of model railways and Scalextric motor racing sets, has agreed to pay compensation of £720,000 to its former chief executive, Keith Ness, who resigned in October.

It is understood that Hornby took legal advice and decided to settle the wrangle out of court. Mr Ness had been paid an annual salary of £113,000 and was on a three-year rolling contract.

He is understood to have waived certain bonus payments in the past, including £150,000 of his 1994 bonus and £250,000 of his 1995 bonus.

The announcement of the compensation payment was contained in Hornby's results for the 15 months to the end of March, which followed the company's recent decision to move its accounting year end.

The latest results showed a pre-tax loss of £5.13 million compared to a loss of £4.3 million in the twelve months to the end of 1995.

Hornby has been selling off non-core businesses and refocusing its operations. It sold the loss-making Fletcher boat business in February.

Chairman Peter Newey said that sales in the second quarter of the year were above expectations, although he warned that no trend had been established.

Mr Newey said Hornby was experiencing fierce competition from other makers of radio-controlled model cars.

### One job where pay is writ large

#### Demand is acute for commercial lawyers. Brief by DAN ATKINSON

**J**OB insecurity, the feel-good factor and the white-collar slump have combined to hit the bourgeoisie for six during the past five years. The big chill has affected all those in the managerial and professional classes.

Well, nearly all. One happy group seems to have been sheltered from the worst of the storm. Not schoolteachers, not nurses, not even accountants.

As Labour agonises over whether £3 an hour is likely to damage Britain's competitive prospects, the London legal profession has been enjoying its very own minimum wage — £110 an hour.

Of course, this is very much the baseline. Assistants' earnings range up to £225 an hour, with an average of £165. Partners in law firms can charge between £150 and £350 an hour. The average is about £248 an hour, about 82 times the proposed legal minimum.

Specialist legal recruitment agency Taylor Root provides these and other figures in the 1996 issue of its annual survey into legal earning-power. Lest any-

one think some sort of short-lived bubble is about to burst, Taylor warns: "Demand for lawyers in private practice, particularly those with banking, corporate or property law experience, is acute."

London figures for hourly rates are, naturally, a little misleading. Partners in the North-east have to stagger along on a meagre average of £149 an hour, while their assistants make ends meet on a mere 35 times the proposed minimum wage, £107 an hour.

Matters are even worse in the West: partners in Hardy Country face a £139 hourly average, and their assistants £93.

The serious money relates not to the defence of wrongly accused persons nor to the high-minded challenging of abuses of state power. Taylor Root's survey devotes most of its space to the opportunities for lawyers to join the legal departments of large companies.

A legal chief in a biotechnology or medical firm can earn £149,000 a year, or £77.60 an hour for a standard week.

Legal eagles haven't had it all their own way, however. Back in private practice, the most miserly hourly rates on average overall — £139 for partners and £90 for assistants — are paid in the South-east outside London.

Perhaps recession has hit the lawyers after all.

## Notebook

### Market verdict on prospect of Blair



Alex Brummer

**A**S Bob Dole is finding in the United States, it is very difficult to unsettle a government which is delivering growth, more jobs and has halved the budget deficit. To attack such a record requires a degree of subtlety which is sometimes difficult to put across.

This is where New Labour, as it likes to call itself in its pre-manifesto, has the advantage. It has a seductive leader who, despite a low inflation, job creating and growing economy, ought to have the skill to exploit the weaknesses in the economic locker.

Although headline unemployment has been falling, job creation is not impressive. Inflation, currently at 2.5 per cent, may be at a remarkable level by post-1945 British standards. But in Germany (in case anyone hasn't noticed) it has come down to 1.4 per cent.

flation: the golden rule will be enforced over spending; and, if one reads the document correctly, the Bank of England will be moved from the shadow of political decision making. This would see the removal of a lever of policy from Great George Street which no other UK Chancellor has dared to attempt. In seeking to meet inflation targets, central banks — particularly those seeking to underpin their credibility — will always steer cautiously.

If, however, Labour is to be ever-so orthodox in its financial behaviour where will the resource come from? Like the Conservatives, New Labour believes that in the field of infrastructure, the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) can do it. Certainly, it is unlikely to make a greater hash of it than have the Tories.

**T**HE traditional attack on Labour, as on the Democrats, is that it is a tax-and-spend party. In the event, Labour's manifesto document makes only one serious threat to impose a one-off windfall tax on the excess profits of the utilities. This would fund a new deal for young people and the long-term unemployed.

It is worth remembering where the idea of one-off windfall taxes first began. Not with Labour, as Michael Heseltine and John Major would have you believe, but with the Tories acting against the clearing banks in 1981.

And if anyone doubts the ability of the power utilities to absorb an excess profits tax, without halting price cuts or raising prices, they should consider that many of them have been able to afford share buybacks — devices typically used by corporations which have so much cash they don't know what to do with it.

In fact, none of what is proposed by New Labour, prospectively the next government, appears to be fazing the financial community at all. In the wake of the policy document publication yesterday, the FTSE advanced more than 40 points, many utility shares were up and the pound touched new highs on the foreign exchange. The only gloom came from the perpetually pessimistic Bill Martin of UBS, who observed that Labour would need to raise £14 billion to bring the UK's fiscal house in order — the price to be paid for the Tories' incompetence.

### Guardian Crossword No 20,697 Set by Fawley

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30

- Across**
- English financiers go back to encourage specialist (12)
  - Positive finally out a second piano release (7)
  - Was threatening, having been let down (7)
  - Do well, being correct about last of clues (7)
  - A complaint with "butler" as a cryptic indication (7)
  - One may get clipped, and be evasive (5)
  - Mum's a Bond fanatic — he opposes maladministration (8)
  - Living with George — perhaps it can ring you down (8)
  - Stolen Spanish article found in Dorchester, possibly (5)
  - Impose measure in favour of the church (7)
  - Trace mysterious ship in Hampshire, perhaps (7)
  - Taking steps to preserve local tradition (7, 5)
- Down**
- Crazy, losing two loves — former victim of adultery (7)
  - It's quite enough to follow previous pattern (7)
  - Prove a sun may explode? This does (9)
  - Type of whisky found on a Mediterranean island (5)
  - Description of clench recently produced (3-4)
  - Teed outting out hard liquor? It makes sound sense (7)
- Crossword solution clues**
- Take over the position of head waiter (4, 3, 5)
  - True believer seizes non-stereo record — his interest to flourish (11)
  - Mend so you heard in awfully dodgy bar (8)
  - Deduce number in serious fire (7)
  - A minor fixed essential component of locks (7)
  - Encourage to try and catch up (7)
  - About to board smart English warship (7)
  - Name of American tree given with hesitation (5)
- Solution tomorrow**
- Can't? Then call our solutions line on 0951 328 828. Calls cost 20p per min. plus VAT and other taxes. Service supplied by ATG.

Damo  
in poetry  
Smear  
Clack  
kills  
tax  
ho  
C  
Inside

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